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WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

May 2014 Iyar/Sivan 5774 Volume XXXVII: Number 8 FREE

Celebrate Israel: a month of programs for the community

Rabbi Ilana Baden, special to the WJN

The Ann Arbor Jewish community once again looks forward to its annual opportunity to honor Israel and what she represents through the Celebrate Israel program. Whereas in past years this event was held on a specific date and time, this year's Celebrate Israel will feature a variety of programs and opportunities throughout the month of May.

David Shtulman, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, explained, "Our committee decided that rather than having just one program for our community, we wanted to provide various events that would appeal to different sub-groups so that even more people could participate in the festivities."

The kick-off event for Celebrate Israel will take place on Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel's Independence Day) on Monday, May 5, at the Michigan Theater, at 9:30 p.m. Following the JCC's Film Festival showing of the *Zig Zag Kid* at 8 p.m., the Celebrate Israel committee will bring in birthday cakes for all to enjoy.

Two days later, Celebrate Israel will sponsor a Business Expo in conjunction with the Michigan Israel Business Bridge. This event, which will feature Israeli innovations in the business world, will take place on Wednesday, May 7 from 5–8 p.m. at the Michigan Theater. The committee encourages people to visit the expo in between the two JCC Film Festival movies that day.

Past Celebrate Israel picnic

A book discussion will be held the following week on Wednesday, May 14 at 7:30 p.m. Victor Lieberman, who recently won the University of Michigan Hillel's Golden Apple award, will lead the community in a conversation about Ari Shavit's *My Promised Land*. Lieberman teaches Arab-Israeli conflict at the University of Michigan. If participants purchase the book through the Federation, 20 percent of the proceeds will be donated to the Jewish community, thanks to the generous support of Barnes and Noble. The discussion will take place at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor.

The highlight of the Celebrate Israel month will be the Israeli-style intergeneration picnic on Sunday, May 18, at noon (rain or shine). A delegation from Nahalal (Ann Arbor's sister community in Israel) and the newly formed JCC Scouts of Ann Arbor will treat the participants to a brief opening ceremony, which will also honor past Ann Arbor-Nahalal Student Exchange participants. These teens will also lead various activities for younger children during the picnic. Food will be available for purchase.

During the picnic, people will have an opportunity to participate in Experience Israel workshops that will highlight the sounds, tastes, and joys of Israel. With the help of the JCC and Hebrew Day School, the Jewish Federation will offer several different sessions, such as K'rav Maga (for ages 14 and older), Israeli Television, Israeli Cooking, and Israeli Dancing. The cost for the picnic, which includes the Experience Israel workshops, is $10 per household if registration is received by May 12, and $18 per household after this "early bird" registration.

Finally, on Thursday, May 22, the Jewish Young Professionals of Ann Arbor will hold a special Happy Hour in honor of Israel. JYP is a program of the Jewish Federation for individuals in their 20s who want to meet other Jewish young professionals in the area.

The Celebrate Israel committee is chaired by Joan Lowenstein and Esther Ullman, and includes Rachel Abramowitz, Levana Aronson, Jeff Baden, Arielle Bloom, Charles Butter, Irene Butter, Rabbi Lisa Delson, Tami Groswald Ozery, Jennifer Lewis, Fran Martin, Lisa Molnar, Cindy Saper, Carey Sherman, and Lisa Weiss. ■

For more information and to register for the events, visit www.jewishannarbor.org or call 677-0100.

JFS to benefit from "Give Local" Day

Rosemary Frenza Chudnof , special to the WJN

Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County is excited to announce that it has been chosen as one of only 50 organizations that will participate in the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation's Give Local day on May 6. This selection means that JFS has the opportunity to raise at least $20,000 from the community on one single day of individual giving.

"Give Local Ann Arbor Area" is a part of "Give Local America," a national day of giving that commemorates the 100th anniversary of the first community foundation. Over 100 community foundations around the country will participate on May 6 by encouraging the public to make online donations to their favorite local organizations

An older adult with a JFS friendly visitor

within a 24-hour time period. The Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation will match any donations made to each organization on a 1:1 basis up to $10,000, and will pay all fees associated with online giving. JFS' goal is to

continues on page 2

2014 Impact Funds awarded

David Shtulman, special to the WJN

The Jewish Federation has announced the winners of the 2014 Jewish Community Impact Fund Awards. The Impact Fund was created as a pilot project three years ago in order to encourage and seed new and innovative projects, to support underserved segments of the community, and to allow those outside of the usual beneficiary network to compete for community dollars. Awards are decided in two ways. For the 2014 Impact Fund, the local Jewish community selected two awards through a vote on the Federation website. A selection committee then met to determine the remainder of the awards up to the $40,000 allocation.

The 2014 Awards conclude the pilot phase of the project. Impact Fund Chair Neal Blatt and his committee evaluated the Jewish Community Impact Fund and recommended that it continue to be funded for three more years based on the following considerations:

• Over three years, 41 proposals were submitted to the Federation and 16 proposals were funded representing efforts by 13 different groups.

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Community

To the editor

The Washtenaw Jewish News published a JNS.org article ("Jewish state" demand gets to the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, April 2014) arguing in favor of Israel's negotiating position that the Palestinian Authority recognize Israel "as a Jewish state." The article contained ad hominem attacks: Hussein Ibish is a "faux moderate"; Peter Beinart is a "professional Jewish critic of Israel." It criticized as lacking "a scintilla of evidence" a meticulously documented article by Mr. Beinart arguing against a Jewish-state definition that unduly burdens non-Jewish citizens and for one that adheres to the promise of its Declaration of Independence: "complete equality of social and political rights… irrespective of religion, race or sex."

It also failed to grasp the complexity of the demand that the Palestinians, unlike the Egyptians or Jordanians in previous peace treaties, recognize Israel as a Jewish state. To illustrate, imagine a future treaty between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran. While the US would have no problem employing the formal name of the country in any document, it ought to reject language explicitly recognizing Iran "as an Islamic republic," since that would amount to taking sides on internal decisions regarding the country's constitutional order. Moreover, countries' descriptors—with terms including "Islamic Republic," "Bolivarian Republic," or "Plurinational State"—have vague meanings at best to the outside world notwithstanding their deep internal resonance. Final agreements over borders and refugees will preserve Israel as a Jewish and democratic state, not Palestinian recognition of Israel's Jewish character.

Nonetheless, Israel could solve the problem singlehandedly by adopting as its official name "The Jewish State of Israel." Then that would be the entity with which any peace agreement would be signed. That construction would be consistent with the official nomenclature of many states, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Adjectives are perfectly fine in country names, if the country can agree on them.

Israel ought not to change its name to "the Jewish State of Israel." Its affiliation is with the non-adjectival countries of the liberal democratic West, rather than the countries listed above. But the potential to resolve this issue through an adjustment in nomenclature implies that Palestinian non-recognition of "Israel as a Jewish state" should not be treated as an insurmountable obstacle to a peace treaty.

Jonathan Levine

JFS "Give Local" Day, continued from page 1

receive at least $10,000 in donations on May 6, thus guaranteeing it will receive a matching $10,000 from the AAACF.

"We were very pleased to be chosen for this opportunity that highlights the importance of supporting local organizations," says JFS Executive Director Anya Abramzon. "JFS was chosen from among hundreds of local organizations, in part because of our human services mission and our unique role in the local community."

To prepare for Give Local day, JFS will be reminding both loyal donors and new potential donors, via email and social media, to donate online between midnight and 11:59 p.m. on May 6. For those donors who either can't or choose not to donate online, JFS will be able to take a check and then make the donation online itself. The minimum donation is only $10.

"We are excited and hopeful that May 6 will be a very impactful day for JFS," says Abramzon, "and one that will support our many vital programs."

Persons who wish to be reminded to give on the day of the match can go to the JFS website to sign up for this service: www.jfsannarbor.org. Find more information about getting involved on JFS's Facebook and Twitter pages, in e-blasts, and online. You may also contact Rosemary Frenza Chudnof at 769-0209 or via email at rosemary@jfsannarbor.org. ■

Resettled families enjoy the JFS International Lunch

WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

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Extra copies of the *Washtenaw Jewish News* are available at locations throughout Washtenaw County.

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Rabbi Gold's chant ritual to honor Pardes Hannah's 20th anniversary

Lucinda Kurtz, special to the WJN

Rabbi Shefa Gold, the inspirational composer and performer of spiritual music and leader in the Jewish Renewal Movement, will lead a Chant Ritual on Saturday, May 10, at 8 p.m., in honor of the 20th Anniversary Celebration of Pardes Hannah. Rabbi Gold is director of C-DEEP, The Center for Devotional, Energy and Ecstatic Practice in Jemez Springs, New Mexico. Her deep spiritual friendship with Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg, who will be honored at this weekend Shabbaton, brings her to Ann Arbor to help the Pardes Hannah Renewal Community celebrate.

Rabbi Shefa Gold

Rabbi Gold brought her love of music and musical ability to her rabbinical studies and received her ordination from both the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and from Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. In describing her pathway into chant, she explains, "I want to study the sacred text with mind and heart, and with the body as well. Chant is very much a heart practice, a devotional practice. I've been doing it for many years because it's my way in. I love it so much. Traveling about half the year doing retreats and seminars and teaching groups the power of Hebrew chant—as well as training chant leaders in Kol Zimra, a two-year program for rabbis, cantors, and lay leaders—is 'my rabbinate,'"

Rabbi Gold's love of chant is also evident in her ten albums and liturgies that have been incorporated into several new prayerbooks and into the services of synagogues throughout the country. Her book, *The Magic of Hebrew Chant: Healing the Spirit, Transforming the Mind, Deepening Love*, presents the fundamentals of chant and elevates chant as a transformational tool, in meditation, in prayer, in healing.

In addition to her exceptional talent in music, her book *Torah Journeys: The Inner Path to the Promised Land* illustrates the depth of her mystical reading of Torah and the creative ways she has evolved to help others find meaning in a weekly meditation upon the Torah parsha. She has also written *In the Fever of Love: An Illumination of the Song of Songs* that Rabbi Lawrence Kushner says, "offers America Jews seeking to rediscover the melody of meditation the perfect primer and inspiration."

Rabbi Gold is on the faculty of the Institute for Jewish Spirituality and includes her understanding of Buddhist, American Indian, Christian, and Islamic spiritual traditions in her teachings, finding the underlying core of devotional energy in each faith system. For more information on Rabbi Shefa Gold, see www.rabbishefagold.com.

Rabbi Gold will present a Chant Ritual with music and story to honor Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg and the 20th Anniversary of Pardes Hannah at 8 p.m., at the home of Linda and Richard Greene. The $25 contribution will support the Pardes Hannah community. For more information, check the Pardes Hannah website at a hannah-www.pardeshannah.org.c-pardes. ■

JFS and JCC begin education series on older adult issues

Cindy Klein, special to the WJN

"We are all older than we were yesterday, like it or not!"—a true statement, and a reminder that aging happens to everyone, regardless of their thoughts on the topic. But, what one understands about aging issues, and how one prepares oneself for it, are subjects one does have control over.

Jane Bassett

Jewish Family Services and the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will sponsor aseries of lectures over the coming months on topics related to the aging process. Whether someone is a primary caregiver for an older adult at this time, will be a caregiver in the future, or is curious as to what choices should be considered, there will be something of interest for everyone.

The first presentation will take place May 21, at 7 p.m., at the JCC. The speaker will be Jane A. Bassett, Elder Law Attorney from Ann Arbor, who brings significant experience with older adult issues, the resources needed to care for older adults, and making plans for one's future needs. Bassett will share information about utilizing Social Security benefits; Medicare and Medicaid eligibility; fiduciary responsibilities; and documents every adult should have.

Register for this event by contacting Diane Fenske from JFS Older Adult Services at 769-0209 or diane@jfsannarbor.org

JCC's Adult Program welcomes spring with music, field trip

Rachael Hoffenblum, special to the WJN

After such a long winter, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor is ready to help its adult members celebrate spring. The JCC's adult program will offer two concerts this May. Local harpist, Laurel Federbush, will perform on Thursday, May 1, as part of the JCC's monthly birthday celebration. Local soprano, Caroline Helton, will perform with her daughter, Hava Kaplan, on Thursday, May 15. Both performances will take place from 1 p.m. until 2 p.m. at the JCC

The JCC's adult program will also be taking a field trip to the 13th Annual Jewish Film Festival on Tuesday, May 6, to watch a screening of *The Third Half*. For additional information or to RSVP for any of these programs, call the JCC at 971-0990.

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Adult Show and Tell scheduled at JCC, May 29

WJN staff writer

Everyone can remember bringing prized possessions to school and taking part in classroom "Show and Tell," and the sense of pride that came from sharing these treasures and stories. Well, adults are getting that opportunity again with a new trend that is sweeping across the nation.

"Show & Tell (for Grown-Ups)" is an initiative promoted by the Association of Personal Historians (APH) that is encouraging adults to bring out those cherished items—whether old or new—and share the stories behind the objects at local storytelling events. Open to all at no charge, the public is invited to bring anything meaningful to them, such as a family heirloom, a photograph, or even a souvenir from a recent trip.

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will host a "Show & Tell (for Grown-Ups)" event on May 29, from 7–9 p.m. The event will be led by JCC founder Chuck Newman, who will be joined by Janet Ogle-Mater and Stephanie Kadel Taras, personal historians dedicated to recording, preserving, and sharing the life stories of individuals, families, communities, and organizations. Participants will receive a recording of their story.

Two more "Show & Tell (for Grown-Ups)" events are scheduled for Ann Arbor in May to celebrate Personal History Month, including May 7, 6–7:30 p.m., at The Old German (117 South Ashley) and May 10, 3–5 p.m., at the Ann Arbor District Library downtown. The story-gathers will also host an event in Chelsea May 22, from 6:30–8:30 p.m., at Thompson's Pizzeria (20700 West Old US Highway 12).

Relive the fun by coming to a local "Show & Tell (for Grown-Ups)" where you can show an item, tell your story, and listen to others share theirs. Each participant will have five minutes to speak and there's no reading or performing; this is amateur storytelling at its best. Attendees are also welcome to come and listen without sharing a story of their own.

Ann Arbor ORT donor event

Joan Levitt, special to the WJN

The Ann Arbor chapter of ORT America will hold its annual Spring Donor Recognition Event on Monday, June 2. This year's event will be held at 7 p.m., at the home of Patti Aaron. Appetizers and desserts, provided by the Book Group and other ORT cooks, will be served. A $10 donation to ORT America is requested.

The event will honor the chapter's 2013 donors and their contributions to the ORT mission. The speaker will be Yodit Mesfin Johnson, director of business development at NEW (Nonprofit Enterprise at Work) in Ann Arbor and Detroit. She will speak about current efforts to revitalize Detroit, "What's Right with Detroit: How a Community is Transforming Itself."

The Ann Arbor Chapter of ORT is also planning its 30th Anniversary as an ORT chapter. The chapter's 30th Anniversary Celebration will be marked by a brunch at the Campus Inn on Sunday, September 14. Current, new, and past members of ORT are invited, and spouses are also encouraged to attend. This brunch will honor past presidents and celebrate 30 years of accomplishments in the chapter. The chapter has been committed to raising money for ORT America's schools and programs around the world. It also has provided Jewish women in Ann Arbor with social and educational events, a thriving Book Group and Cinema Club, and more.

ORT is the largest Jewish education nonprofit in the world. It provides cutting-edge educational skills in state-of-the-art technology and other fields that enable over 300,000 students annually to attain successful careers and become community leaders.

Rides to the June 2 Donor Event will be available to those who need them. For more information or to RSVP, contact Joan Levitt at jflevitt@comcast.net by May 23.

Ongoing Hadassah "rummage sale"

Judy Williams, special to the WJN

Throughout the year, The Ann Arbor Chapter of Hadassah collects women's clothing as well as household items. They are then brought to re-sale consignment shops in order to raise money for worthwhile Hadassah programs. Clothing is accepted for any season of the year. A donation receipt will be given for all items as all donations are tax-deductible.

Only the following items can be accepted:

- Clean, stain-free, current, name-brand women's clothing (on hangers);
- Clean, good-quality household items (in liftable boxes). Items can include dishes, glassware, linens, polished metalware, electrical appliances (in working order) No telephones or electronic devices such as computers or printers can be accepted.

To schedule a pick-up appointment, email Judy Williams for clothing (naugwarren@aol.com) and call Cecy Copeland (487-4171) for household items.

The 13th Annual Jewish Film Festival

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MONDAY, MAY 5
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SPONSOR RECEPTION ★ 6:00 p.m.

The Zig Zag Kid ★ 8:00 p.m

TUESDAY, MAY 6
The Third Half ★ 2:00 p.m.

Blumenthal ★ 5:00 p.m.

The Attack ★ 8:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7
Next Year in Jerusalem ★ 2:00 p.m.

Bethlehem ★ 5:00 p.m.

Quality Balls ★ 8:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 8
Out in the Dark ★ 2:00 p.m.

The Pin ★ 5:00 p.m.
with special guest speaker Aron Kaufman

The Sturgeon Queens ★ 8:00 p.m.
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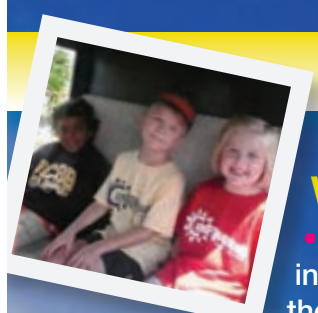

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Questions? *For Camp Raanana, contact Ethan Krasnow at ethankrasnow@jccfed.org.*
For Camp Keshet, contact Peretz Hirshbein at peretzhirshbein@jccfed.org.

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CAMP RAANANA

Camp Keshet

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JFS celebrates community service

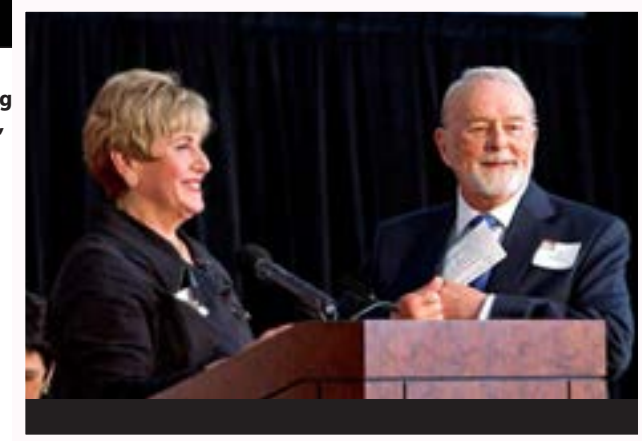
Rosemary Frenza Chudnof, special to the WJN

On Sunday, April 6, Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County held its annual fundraising event and celebration. "Sweet Charity: The Joy of Giving Back" was held at the North Campus Research Complex, and honored longtime community volunteers Susan Fisher and John Waidley for their many years of service to JFS and numerous other organizations.

Jessica Vinter (center) received the JFS Outstanding Employee of the Year Award, flanked by Susan Fisher and John Waidley

After guests enjoyed a social hour and wine reception, the event's program began with remarks from JFS Board Member Nan Gill and Board President Bob Miller. As part of a creative partnering between local non-profit agencies, the Performance Network Theatre Company then performed a musical interlude for the guests. After a video presentation celebrating community volunteerism, Fisher's son David Kersch and Fisher's sister Anita Rackow spoke movingly of the couple and their contributions to the community, and David Shtulman praised Fisher's long-term role with the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. Fisher and Waidley received the Isadore and Claire Bernstein Award for their years of dedication to JFS and its programs. Guests were then treated to a dramatic performance by four Performance Network actors, who performed an original work, *The Tradition of Kindness: Four Stories*. The piece was written for the occasion by local playwright Simone Yehuda and was based on the refugee resettlement experience of persons from 1900 through the present.

"I am very excited and pleased with the collaboration between the Performance Network and JFS on this special event," said JFS Executive Director Anya Abramzon. "This was an original way for two non-profit agencies to come together and further each other's missions. I am hopeful that this will be a model for future partnerships in the community."



Susan Fisher and John Waidley accepted the Claire and Isadore Bernstein Award

The event also featured the presentation of JFS' Outstanding Staff Award, which was given this year to ESL Program Coordinator Jessica Vinter for her compassionate and excellent service to JFS' clients.

After a second musical interlude by the Performance Network, guests were encouraged to stay for an "afterglow" hour, an opportunity to linger and socialize while enjoying the desserts prepared by event caterer Amanda's Kitchen.

JFS staff consider "Sweet Charity" a rousing success, and Abramzon noted that the event was possible due to the support of JFS' many donors and community partners. ■

Actors from the Performance Network Theatre sang about "Sweet Charity"

Community invited to Jewish Communal Leadership Program graduation

Andrea Siegel, special to the WJN

The University of Michigan's Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP), based at the School of Social Work, will host its annual graduation ceremony on Friday, May 2, at 3 p.m. Members of the Ann Arbor community are invited to attend.

Offering keynote remarks will be philanthropist Mandell "Bill" Berman, a long-time Jewish communal leader and supporter of pivotal programs and initiatives to strengthen Jewish life locally, nationally, and internationally. Berman has served as president of Detroit's Jewish Federation and of the national Council of Jewish Federations. His visionary philanthropic leadership has also shaped institutions and initiatives as varied as U-M Hillel, the Association for the Social Scientific Study of Jewry, the Jewish Education Service of North America, United Hebrew Schools of Detroit, the 1990 and 2000–2001 National Jewish Population Surveys, the Berman Jewish Policy Archive, the Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit, research to support children with disabilities, and the Inter Agency Task Force on Israeli Arab Issues.

As for young JCLP students into the ranks of Jewish Communal Service professionals, the opportunity to hear from someone who has invested himself in Jewish communal leadership for over six decades is most welcome.

Dr. Laura Lein, dean, U-M School of Social Work; Dr. Karla Goldman, director, JCLP; and Dr. Deborah Dash Moore, director, Jean & Samuel Frankel Center for Judaic Studies, will offer additional remarks, as will the four graduating students.

As JCLP says farewell to the Class of 2014, it is fitting to note students' diverse interests and accomplishments:

Mandell "Bill" Berman (center) flanked by JCLP students

- Sammi Cutler, a native of West Bloomfield, completed both her graduate and undergraduate degrees at University of Michigan. Her JCLP field placement was at Jewish Family Service of Metropolitan Detroit, where she was able to gain experience with event planning and older adult programs. As part of her work on JCLP's 2014 Communal Conversation, Cutler designed a strategy session for Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's Early Childhood Center. Cutler particularly benefited from the opportunity to take courses in the Stephen M. Ross School of Business as a JCLP student.
- As an engaged member of the Roman Catholic faith, Sarah McEwan brought a distinctive perspective to her studies within JCLP. Her own background attuned her to the particular strengths of Jewish community and the ways in which ethnic and historical perspectives differentiate Jewish communal work and commitments from those found in the Catholic community. McEwan, who grew up in Mason, Michigan, previously participated in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest (Spokane, Washington) and spent a year working with Native American students at St. Paul's Mission Grade School on the Fort Belknap reservation in Hays, Montana. Her JCLP field placements were with Temple Beth Emeth, Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County, and Catholic Social Services. McEwan plans a career in faith-based service that recognizes the power of interfaith collaboration.
- Avital Ostfield, a Twin Cities native, taught in the Detroit public schools as a Teach for America (TFA) corps member prior to coming to JCLP. Over the past two years, she has built a strong professional profile in a variety of local organizations: fieldwork at National Council of Jewish Women/Greater Detroit Section and Jewish Family Service of Metropolitan Detroit, teaching at Temple Beth Emeth, and staffing a Birthright trip for University of Michigan Hillel. In JCLP, she focused on Management of Human Services; Community and Social Systems; and Interpersonal Practice. Her interests include education and philanthropy.
- Bobby Siporin is from Huntington Woods, and a Wexner Fellow. During his first year with JCLP, the National Association of Social Workers-Michigan named him Student of the Year for University of Michigan. Building upon his prior work in New Orleans schools (including two years as a Teach for America corps member), in 2012 Siporin created the campus organization "We Support Detroit Schools" to create reciprocal partnerships between U-M students and public school students in Detroit to meet community needs. Siporin is passionate about building bridges between Jews and non-Jews to respond to urban challenges.

JCLP's 2014 graduation ceremony will be held at the Educational Conference Center in U-M's School of Social Work, 1080 South University Ave. RSVP to be part of this special occasion and to hear the voices of committed Jewish leaders from across the generations. Call 764-5392 or email JCLP Program Manager Dr. Andrea Siegel at ansiegel@umich.edu. ■

New cohort of Frankel Institute fellows announced

Yaffa Klugerman, special to the WJN

Biblical sacrifices, European imperial borderlands, Roman architecture, post-Communist Jewish communities, and Iberian Conversos. That's a taste of some of the topics that the 2014–15 Frankel Institute for Judaic Studies fellows will research this coming year at the University of Michigan.

A total of 14 prestigious scholars hailing from around the world will focus on the theme of "Jews and Empires." The group will be led by Mikhail Krutikov, associate professor for Slavic and Judaic Studies at U-M.

Established through a generous financial contribution from the Jean and Samuel Frankel Jewish Heritage Foundation, the Frankel Institute provides annual fellowships for scholars and artists around the world to conduct research on a given theme. With the goal of advancing Jewish studies globally, it remains the only program of its kind at a public university in the United States. Additionally, the Institute offers a broad range of events to the public, including lectures, symposia, art exhibitions, and musical performances.

"The theme of Jews and Empires, because it applies to Jewish experiences as imperial subjects in so many times and places—from ancient Roman and Persian empires to 20th century Russian and Ottoman empires—will bring together a particularly diverse group of scholars who rarely get an opportunity to talk to each other," remarked Deborah Dash Moore, director of the Frankel Center. "It's going to be a dynamite year."

The new fellowship year will begin in September, and the topics of research promise to be fascinating.

Incoming fellow Reuven Kiperwasser, for example, who teaches Midrash and Rabbinics at the Open University of Israel, will travel to Ann Arbor to study Babylonian and Palestinian rabbis who emerged from the Roman and Sassanian empires.

Reuven Kiperwasser

"In order to accomplish this research project successfully, I need a supportive environment where I can express and exchange ideas with colleagues on the topics of my research and on related topics," he said. "I believe that the Frankel Institute is an appropriate place for this. I anticipate a fruitful and enriching discourse within its environs."

Jindrich Toman, professor of Slavic languages and literatures at U-M, will join the group to research Jewish culture in 19th century Bohemia.

"I very much hope that the semester at the Frankel Center will make it possible for me to make substantial progress on a monograph on these topics," Toman said. "But above all, I am looking forward to be able to discuss my research with the fellows within the frame of the current theme of Jews and Empires."

Jindrich Toman

The 2014–15 Frankel fellows and their fields of research are:

- Mira Balberg, Northwestern University "Blood for Thought: The Rabbinic Reinvention of Sacrifice in Its Roman and Early Christian Context"
- Eitan Bar-Yosef, Ben-Gurion University "Zionism, the British Empire, and the Making of Israeli Identity: Mimicry, Resistance, and Nostalgia"
- Joshua Cole, University of Michigan "A Riot in France: Violence and Colonial Reform in Algeria, 1919–1940"
- Sara Feldman, University of Michigan "People of the Russian Book: Translating Pushkin into Jewish Languages"
- Zvi Gitelman, University of Michigan (winter semester) "Under and After Empire: Jewish Public Life After Communism"
- Reuven Kiperwasser, Open University of Israel (winter semester)"Rabbis Between Two Empires"
- Gil Klein, Loyola Marymount University "The Roman Architecture of Empire and the Establishment of Rabbinic Space"
- Mikhail Krutikov, University of Michigan "Spaces of Memory: Imagining a Soviet Past in Post-Soviet Russian Jewish Writing"
- Devi Mays, University of Michigan (fall semester)"Reorienting Imperial Jews: Constantinople at the Crossroads of Jewish Identities"
- Alexei Siverstev, DePaul University "Jews and the Roman Imperial Culture in Late Antiquity"
- Claude Stuczyniski, Bar-Ilan University (short-term fall semester) "Iberian Conversos: Victims, Agents, and Thinkers of Empire"
- Jindrich Toman, University of Michigan (fall semester) "Bohemia's Jews and Their Decentered Empire"
- Jeffrey Veidlinger, University of Michigan "Border Jew: Between Empires"
- Deborah Yalen, Colorado State University (fall semester) "Forging the Anti-Imperial Empire: Jews, Ethnographic Science, and the Soviet Family of Nations" ■

Twenty-five years of interfaith dialogue and learning

Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, special to the WJN

I began my rabbinic career in a small synagogue in a largely rural town north of Philadelphia. One of my first goals as I entered the rabbinate was to seek out opportunities for interfaith dialogue as I had always been interested in learning about other faiths and was concerned, especially in a small town like Lansdale, Pennsylvania, that there might be some misconceptions about Judaism.

Rabbi Robert Dobrusin

Shortly after I began my work, I discovered the local "ministerium" and found the opportunity to meet with clergy colleagues to be invaluable.

It was not always easy. At the first annual "Interfaith Thanksgiving Service" that I attended, I quickly realized that "interfaith" meant bringing all the denominations of Christianity together. It was an awkward evening for me to say the least and I told the group that very clearly at our next meeting. That resulted in some minor changes in future "interfaith services". I was never 100% comfortable in those settings as they still used some exclusionary language that I could not accept. Still, I felt that the greater good was being served by continuing close relationships with my colleagues.

When I came to Ann Arbor, I sought out opportunities that I had hoped would be more comfortable. There were some groups that were meeting to discuss issues of theology or practice but there was no comprehensive group that brought leaders of different faiths together in dialogue.

That changed in 1994 when the Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County was formed. I was eager to be involved in this dialogue group and am proud to say that 20 years later, the Round Table is still thriving, providing for clergy and lay leaders of faith communities in our area a forum for building bridges of understand and responding to shared concerns.

Under the tireless leadership of Rev. George Lambrides, the group has grown in many different ways and today with Rev. Lambrides and Rev. Susan King serving as co-directors, the Round Table continues to seek ways to bring those of different faiths together in dialogue and friendship.

Over the past 20 years, I have enjoyed and benefitted from my participation in this group immensely. The participants represent many different religious faiths and perspectives and I have become close friends with people I would probably not have encountered had it not been for the monthly Round Table meetings.

In addition to the monthly dialogue meetings, there have been many special events as well. Among the highlights was an interfaith trip to Israel in 2000 that I still remember as one of the most exciting and inspiring of my many trips to Israel.

> ***I believe very strongly in the need for those of different faiths to learn from each other and to insure that their own faiths are understood and appreciated by others***

Another highlight has been the annual Interfaith Thanksgiving celebration that takes place on the Sunday evening before the holiday. This celebration, unlike the one that I experienced many years ago in Pennsylvania, aims to be comfortable for all and that is quite an accomplishment given the vastly different perspectives of the participants. We have been honored to host the celebration at Beth Israel on two occasions and our sanctuary was filled with inspiring words, music and chanting from different religious traditions.

I believe very strongly in the need for those of different faiths to learn from each other and to insure that their own faiths are understood and appreciated by others. The Round Table continues to give us opportunities for dialogue and understanding.

On Sunday evening, May 18, the Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County will celebrate its 20th anniversary at a program to be held at the Chinmaya Mission (Hindu) on Packard Road.

The program will include a vegetarian Indian meal and presentations from many Round Table participants.

The celebration is open to all and if you would like to learn more about this very special event, please visit the website at irtwc.org. It promises to be a wonderful evening and I hope you will join us for the celebration.

As a Jew, I know how much Torah there is to learn and how important it is to continue our traditions midor l'dor, from generation to generation.

But, I also believe it is critical for us to learn from those around us and teach them from our wisdom as well. The Round Table has been the forum in which I have been able to do this over the past 20 years and, God willing, for many years to come. ■

From barley to wheat

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, special to the WJN

Every day, starting in the middle of April, for the entire month of May, and part of June, we will be doing a very special mitzvah called "The Counting of the Omer." It begins on the second day of Passover and ends the day before the holiday of Shavuot. We count 49 days, seven weeks, hence the name Shavuot - Hebrew for "weeks." Since the entire month of May will be occupied with the Counting of the Omer, it seems appropriate that we discuss lessons we can learn from "The Counting of the Omer."

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein

The Torah commands us to sacrifice two grain offerings from the new crop, in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, before we can benefit from the new crop. One is called the Omer offering, consisting of barley and is brought on the second day of Passover. The second grain offering is called *Shtay Ha'lechem* (the two loaves of bread); it is made of wheat rather than barley and is brought on Shavuot. Before Passover, all the new grains, started the previous year after Passover until the current Passover season, could not yet be eaten. This is called "*chodosh*" – new grain. Actually, even after sacrificing the Omer (the barley) offering the priests in the Holy Temple were still not permitted to bring any sacrifice from the new crop. They had to wait seven weeks until after "The Counting of the Omer"—until Shavuot. Then they could utilize the new grain crops for the rest of the year.

We find a difference in these two prohibitions; not eating from the new grain (*chodosh*) crops until after Passover, and the preferred action—waiting until after Shavuot. According to Jewish law, if a person wanted to use "new grain" as a sacrificial offering, for food, or any other beneficial usage—before the current Passover season—they would be absolutely prohibited—the offering would be invalid. However, if a priest accidentally made a grain offering after the Passover barley offering but before Shavuot, the law says the offering is kosher. So why is it that the barley offering brought prematurely (before Passover) is invalid but the wheat offering brought prematurely (between Passover and Shavuot) is acceptable? There are two ways to answer this question: one is by Jewish law and the other is from a spiritual, metaphysical perspective. We'll take the latter perspective first.

Bringing an offering to the Temple is a means for us to get closer to God. So, symbolically, offering the two types of grains at the Holy Temple represents the two aspects of our soul that we are offering to God. The first offering, of barley, is a coarse, lower food that is primarily for animals. This represents the lower, animalistic aspect of our nature—the animal soul as it is known in Chassidus. The second offering, of wheat breads, shows how we offer a less coarse, higher order food that is primarily for people. This represents the higher, spiritual aspect of our nature—the godly soul, as it is known in Chassidus.

From the above distinction we can explain the differences in Jewish law regarding:

1. The prohibition against bringing the new grains as offerings before Passover
2. The preferred policy of waiting until Shavuot to use the new grain crops
3. The exception made for the time between Passover and Shavuot.

An offering made before Passover is invalid. This symbolizes that a person has not yet subjugated and corrected their animal soul. Consequently, that person cannot yet go out into the world and attempt "tikkun olam"—correcting the world. If they have not yet mastered their animalistic tendencies, they will be drawn down away from God's path into the temptations of the physical world. It is only after subjugation to God's will and having the attitude that the purpose for getting involved in the world is to serve God, that one will have the strength and ability to engage in correcting the world. In addition to this, even after a person "brings the first offering of barley" and manages to subjugate their animal soul to God, there is still a need to do more to improve their level of holiness. This means bringing the godly soul closer to God. That is the reason why it is not recommended to bring a sacrifice from the "new wheat grain crop" before bringing the offering of wheat on the holiday of Shavuot. By waiting until Shavuot, it shows that one is bringing both the animal and the godly soul into subjugation and service to God. After one subjugates and offers both the animal and godly souls to the service of God, then one can be strong enough to go out into the world and "benefit" from the "new grain crop" with maximum effect. However, nobody is perfect, so if one inadvertently didn't wait the full complement of time to bring the wheat offering, it is still acceptable because the main hurdle that precludes engagement in "tikkun olam" is the subjugation of the animal soul, represented by the barley offering.

The counting of the Omer (aka Sefirot), not merely counting numbers but working on our self-improvement, refining our character traits and trying to bring both our animal soul and our godly soul into better service to God. Once this is accomplished, with the help of the structured exercises used during the seven weeks, we will be ready to receive the Torah (Shavuot commemorates receiving the Torah). ■

Chabad offers JLI course based on teachings of Rabbi Schneerson

Mendel Sirota, special to the WJN

Chabad of Ann Arbor will present "Paradigm Shift: Transformational Life Teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe," a new six-session course by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute. The course will be offered as part of a series of local activities in Ann Arbor, marking 20 years since the passing of "the Rebbe," Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson. The Rebbe was a visionary religious leader who inspired countless individuals during his lifetime and established a global network of educational, social, and religious institutions to revive the post-Holocaust Jewish landscape.

Paradigm Shift will be offered Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m., and 7:30 p.m., beginning May 20. The course will explore Rabbi Schneerson's philosophy and outlook, offering participants the chance to see things from a radically different perspective. "It's like putting on a new pair of glasses through which everything appears much more vivid; it enables you to see so much more," explained Rabbi Zalman Abraham of JLI's Brooklyn headquarters. "The Rebbe guided individuals to see the potential and inherent goodness in themselves, in others, and in every circumstance of their lives; we hope to convey a glimpse of this outlook to participants of the course." Paradigm Shift is an important contribution to the Rebbe's legacy—the product of a collaboration of over two dozen experts on Rabbi Schneerson's teachings. It addresses questions such as: What were the Rebbe's central teachings and contributions to Judaism and society? What was his understanding of the human being and what were his hopes for humanity? What stands behind the continued success of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement? And how can we apply these insights toward living a more purposeful life?

Last year's JLI class members

"We all want to live up to our inherent design, to make the best of the unique set of skills and circumstances that we were given," said Chabad Rabbi Aharon Goldstein. "Paradigm Shift is the first step; it's about visualizing what is possible and seeing how you can make it a reality. "Like all JLI programs, Paradigm Shift is designed to appeal to people at all levels of Jewish knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple, or other house of worship. Interested students may call 995-3276 x 2 or visit www.myJLI.com for registration and other course-related information. ■

Music is midrash

SooJi Min, special to the WJN

Starting from age 6, Cantor Regina Lambert-Hayut was on a path toward the stage. Her grandmother, Anna, taught her Yiddish songs and would have her granddaughter sing for her friends. Cantor Hayut loved to sing and also played the cello. After college, she returned to the New York area to study music and to perform. Truth be told, Cantor Hayut had her eyes set on the 3,800-seat concert stage of the New York City-based Metropolitan Opera House—think American soprano Renée Fleming. "I loved her rich, silky voice and what seemed to be her warm and genuine personality both on and off the stage," says Hayut.

At the time, Hayut was living in Jericho, New York. When Cantor Marvin Antosofsky, the cantor of her childhood synagogue, asked her to sing in a cantor's ensemble that he was conducting, she couldn't refuse. "There weren't any women in it," adds Hayut. "So he wanted me to balance out the voices." That experience lead to a position as cantorial soloist at Temple Sinai in Massapequa, a town on Long Island.

And the rest was history. Cantor Hayut was on a new path—this one leading to the bima. As she read and studied, exploring the Jewish tradition and history, she did a pulpit switch. "I began to question whether the concert stage was the right pulpit for me," says Hayut. "I soon realized that it was not the theatrical stage that I was interested in performing on but the bima."

Cantor Hayut will be the first to say that she traded in the applause and flowers from the concert stage for the deep satisfaction of helping to shape a positive and fulfilling Jewish future for herself and others. Her two previous pulpits were at The Barnert Temple in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, and most recently at Temple Beth Or, in the Township of Washington, New Jersey. Yet, not surprisingly, Cantor Hayut has collected her own share of fans—old and new—who praise her for her many lovely qualities.

"I love helping people find their connection to the synagogue through music, whether vocal or instrumental. Music is my midrash."

Cantor Regina Lambert-Hayut

"Her voice is just wonderful, clear and inspiring," says Rabbi Joel Soffin who first met Cantor Hayut when he was the sabbatical rabbi at Barnert Temple in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey. "There is a sweetness that comes out in the way she relates to everyone."

"What I appreciate even more than Cantor Hayut's musical abilities and strength of character is the kindness she exhibits at all times," says Temple Beth Emeth's Rabbi Robert Levy.

Starting on July 1, 2014, Cantor Hayut enters a new phase of her career, joining the bima of Temple Beth Emeth. She moves with her husband, Avishay, who is a physical therapist and their children, 14-year- old Yoav and 13-year-old Alon, who are also both accomplished musicians. TBE's Cantor Annie Rose will retire around the same time.

"As a cantor committed to Reform Jewish life in America, I am more determined than ever to work toward deeper engagement of our constituents who have already come through our doors," says Cantor Hayut. As more and more young American Jews reject Jewish institutional affiliation, Cantor Hayut strives to encourage potential members to find a meaningful Jewish experience within the sacred walls of the synagogue.

"I love the excitement and energy of creating fun and wonderful programs that make us feel like a community. I love helping people find their connection to the synagogue through music, whether vocal or instrumental. Music is my midrash." . ■

This month at Temple Beth Emeth

Rabbi Lisa Delson, special to the WJN

Temple Beth Emeth Commemorates Yom HaShoah Friday, May 2

Each spring Jews around the world commemorate the loss of life during the Holocaust and the survival of the Jewish people on Yom HaShoah. TBE's Generations After Group, made up of Holocaust survivors and their families, will lead the congregation in prayer and remembrance during Shabbat services on May 2, at 7:30 p.m. Music written by Jews around the world before and during World War II is the basis for this service with personal family stories included. The entire Ann Arbor Jewish community is welcome to attend this service.

Families with Young Children (FYC): Shabbat Service times every Friday

Tot (0–5 year olds) Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Levy and Cantor Annie Rose, 6 p.m.
Dinner for Tot Shabbat 6:30 p.m.
Popsicle Oneg, 7 p.m.
Traditional Shabbat Service, 7:30 p.m.

Shabbat Dinner and Service Honoring Rabbi Lisa Delson

Friday, May 30, 6 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. service

The Temple Beth Emeth community will celebrate the many blessings Rabbi Lisa Delson has brought to Ann Arbor with a special dinner. After a Shabbat service the celebration will continue with an oneg.

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Levy

Fridays, 2, 9, 23, 30, 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Join Rabbi Levy for a relaxed and informative lunch and learn series. All sessions are held in the Adult Lounge and are open to the community. Lunch is not provided; bring your own.

Shalom Gever

Mondays and Wednesdays, May 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28, 4:30–8 p.m.

Temple Beth Emeth's Martial Arts for Health, Fitness and Self-defense. Come feel the energy! Find out what it's all about. Open to grades K–12. Grades K-2 meet from 4:15–5 p.m., grades 3–5 meet from 5:15–or 6:15–7 p.m., grades 6-9 meet from 7:15–8 p.m., and grades 10–12 meet from 7:15–8 p.m.. Questions? Contact Rabbi Peter Gluck at info@shalomgever.com or SooJi Min at 665-4744.

Spirituality Book Club

Thursday, May 15, Noon and Tuesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m.

Join Cantor Annie Rose as she leads a discussion on *One God, Many Paths: Finding Meaning and Inspiration in Jewish Teachings,* by Rabbi Amy Hirshberg Lederman. This book celebrates the joy and wisdom that the teachings of Judaism can bring to everyday life. Lederman's heartwarming stories inspire as they provide new insights into love, family, work, relationships, tradition, and God.

Men's Torah Study

Mondays, May 5 and 19, 7:30–9 p.m.

Temple Beth Emeth's Men's Torah study meets twice a month for an evening of learning. Refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Roger Stutesman, rgstutesmanatsbcglobal.net. ■

Upcoming activities at Beth Israel Congregation

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN

Lunch & Learn Series

Wednesdays, May 7, 14, 21, 28, Noon–1:15 p.m.
Garfunkel Schteingart Activities Center (2010 Washtenaw Ave.)

The May Lunch and Learn series will kick off with a lunch and learn celebrating Yom Ha'atzamaut, Israel Independence Day on Wednesday, May 7. An Israeli meal will be provided by Beth Israel and the study will center on the importance of the Land of Israel in Jewish tradition. RSVP for that particular session by Monday, May 5. For the rest of the month, participants are asked to bring a dairy lunch; Beth Israel will provide the beverages and snacks. Rabbi Dobrusin and Rabbi Blumenthal facilitate these sessions.

Shabbat Limmud

Saturday, May 3 and 17, 9–9:45 a.m.

Rabbi Robert Dobrusin will facilitate a discussion on Parashat HaShavua, the Torah portion of the week. All are welcome to participate in an informal conversation on the Torah portion over coffee and cake preceding the Shabbat morning service.

"Supporting You at a Time of Need: Funerals and Mourning at Beth Israel and Beth Israel Memorial Gardens"

Monday, May 12, 8 p.m.

One of the most important functions of a synagogue is to be a source of support during times of loss. Although it may be difficult, it is wise to consider important questions regarding funeral and burial before a death occurs. This program will address many of the questions that are asked concerning funerals and burial. Rabbi Kim Blumenthal and Rabbi Robert Dobrusin will facilitate the discussion along with Rebecca Kanner, the synagogue cemetery representative.

These subjects will be addressed: How does one contact a funeral director for preplanning or at a time of need? What is the procedure for funerals conducted at Beth Israel? How does one arrange for the purchase of a cemetery plot at Beth Israel Memorial Garden at Arborcrest Memorial Park? What arrangements are made for funerals or burial out of town? How will Beth Israel help to support the family during shiva and beyond? Participants are asked to bring their questions and concerns.

Adult Hebrew Spring Session

The community adult Hebrew classes offered by Beth Israel and Temple Beth Emeth will continue for a spring term. Tuition for this 6-week term is $90 for members of either congregation, and $100 for non-members. University students can attend the classes for a special rate of $25. Classes will be held from early May through June.

Individuals thinking of attending Rabbi Dobrusin's study trip to Israel next March, or Rabbi Blumenthal's family trip next June, or who are personally planning a trip to Israel, or who want to work on prayer book or Bible skills, are asked to contact Cindy Saper, school@bethisrael-aa.org. She will help with placement in a Hebrew class to best help one meet their Hebrew goals.

Mini Minyan

At Mini Minyan kids celebrate Shabbat with the songs and stories they loved from Tot Shabbat while also learning new prayers and discovering more about Shabbat and other holidays through discussions, games, and activities. Mini Minyan meets the second Saturday of the month throughout the school year. There is no fee for this program.

Tot Shabbat

Saturdays, May 10 and 24, 11:15 a.m.

Tot Shabbat is Beth Israel's Shabbat morning program for parents and their children 2–5 years old and includes songs, stories, and prayers. It also includes the mysterious "Shabbat Box," Torah processions with stuffed Torah toys, and a kiddush for tots. Peretz Hirshbein, the director the JCC Early Childhood Center, leads the program. Tot Shabbat meets at Beth Israel on the lower level in room 15. Following services child-size tables are set out for Tot Shabbat kids, and their families are always invited to stay to enjoy a kiddush lunch with the rest of the congregation. There is no fee for this program. ■

Beth Israel puts the fun in fundraiser

Beth Israel's annual fundraiser will honor Eileen and Saul Hymans. The evening's theme is "1964," the year Eileen and Saul became members of Beth Israel, 50 years ago. The fundraiser will take place on Sunday, June 1, at 7 p.m.

Eileen and Saul Hymans

The fundraiser will feature hors d'oeuvres and desserts, and a fun program highlighting the year 1964, which included the Beatles performing on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, the debut of *Fiddler on the Roof*, the airing of *Jeopardy* for the first time, and Ford's introduction of the first Mustang.

Eileen and Saul moved to Ann Arbor in 1964 when Saul joined the faculty of the University of Michigan. Eileen has served on the Beth Israel education and mitzvah committees. Saul served as president of Beth Israel from 1969–1970 and served on the building committee when the current synagogue building was designed and built. Both currently serve on the president's advisory committee for the Beth Israel Second Century Endowment Fund. Saul is emeritus professor of economics and statistics at the University of Michigan.

Sponsors of the event include Bonnie Castleberry (Independency Priorities), Matthew Kaplan and Caroline Helton, Stephen and Pamela Landau, the Tichel Group and the Tichel Jr's and Ticheletes. For an invitation and tribute book information, call the Beth Israel office, 665-9897.

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation celebrates spring

Michal Woll, special to the WJN

Pesach has passed, spring is finally here and the land has come to life. What a wonderful time to follow up on the excitement and energy of the March community conversation on Food, Land and Justice. In addition to two special programs focused on Fair Food and the upcoming Shemitah year, AARC will gather for its monthly musical and delicious Fourth Friday Service and Dinner as well as introduce the community to its Beit Sefer school program.

Learning and Havdalah: Eating within our ethics and our budgets

Saturday, May 3, 7 p.m.

Making good decisions about what food we buy and where we buy it will not fix the broken food system. Yet this is where every concerned individual must start. For many, these personal decisions, and their potential financial implications, can be daunting. AARC members Rena Basch and Carole Caplan will facilitate this program addressing the myriad questions of how to use food-purchasing dollars most ethically, responsibly and effectively. This program will be held at the home of Michal Woll and Jon Sweeney, 2960 Lakeview Drive. RSVP to ravmichal@aarecon.org or 845-2361.

Information Brunch about Beit Sefer

Sunday, May 4, noon–1:30 p.m.

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC) will host an annual brunch for parents and families interested in Beit Sefer, the AARC religious school. Children can play together at this informal gathering while parents ask questions and learn about the innovative and engaging education offered to K–7th graders. The AARC Beit Sefer strives to provide an understanding of Jewish tradition, to develop Hebrew language and to encourage self-expression. The school welcomes blended families of various backgrounds and faiths. This event will take place in the home of Caroline Richardson and Paul Resnick. RSVP to Karin Ahbel-Rappe at k.ahbel-rappe@sbcglobal.net or leave a message at 445-1910.

Second Saturday Shabbat Morning Service Featuring Parashat Behar

Sunday, May 10, 9:30 a.m.–noon

AARC will expand its usual Second Saturday Shabbat gathering with a, multi-faceted service to celebrate the upcoming Shemitah year. Attendees will read and study from Parashat Behar, which contains the bulk of the mitzvot involving the sabbatical year and other issues of food and land justice. Themes of rest, renewal, and release will be woven throughout the morning through movement, music and meditation. Services are held at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. Contact Rabbi Michal Woll at ravmichal@aarecon.org or call 845 2361 for more information.

Fourth Friday Kabbalat Shabbat

Friday, May 23, 6:15–7:30 p.m.

AARC will welcome Shabbat with its monthly musical Kabbalat Shabbat service. The congregational band accompanies a unique liturgy consisting both traditional and contemporary prayers, chants and readings. The service runs from 6:15–7:30 p.m. and is followed by a vegetarian /dairy potluck dinner. Fourth Friday services are held at the JCC. For more information, contact the AARC by website, www.aarecon.org, via e-mail, info@aarecon.org, or by phone, 445-1910. RSVP for childcare and pizza snack offered from 6–7:30 p.m.

Shmita Study Group

Sunday, May 25, 10–11:30 a.m.

This study group meets on the fourth Sunday mornings through June at the JCC. The group, led by Marcy Epstein, will delve into the sources and contemporary relevance of Sabbatical/Shmita with lively dialog on personal, social, communal and environmental transformations possible in the coming year. Email Epstein at dr_marcy@hotmail.com for more information. ■

What do jelly fish and cancer cells have in common?

Laurie Leflein, special to the WJN

The Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor's fifth grade class learned the answer to that question when they visited Dr. Diane Simeone's University of Michigan Pancreatic Cancer Lab. What might you ask are a bunch of fifth graders doing in a pancreatic cancer lab? Last fall the HDS Student Council began researching worthy causes to target for this year's fundraising efforts. The children researched many different organizations, and in the end, they democratically voted to support Dr. Simeone's lab. The children chose pancreatic cancer because they learned that not only is pancreatic cancer one of the worst cancers to get in terms of survival rates, it is also one of the worst in terms of research funding.

Students were intrigued by an afternoon of hands-on learning led by a talented interdisciplinary team of PhDs, graduate students, engineers, and experts in computer modeling, who bring together many types of expertise to tackle the problem of pancreatic cancer. They quickly learned that Dr. Simeone is not only passionate about finding a cure for pancreatic cancer, she is also passionate about engaging young minds in scientific research. Dr. Simeone presented a short lecture on the role of the pancreas in the body, pancreatic cancer biology and statistics, efforts to find earlier diagnosis techniques, and more effective medicines to treat this cancer. Another physician poked his head out of his office to talk to the children about how he uses the computer to fight cancer. His area of expertise in the team is in Experimental Therapeutics, where scientists have a virtual library of 10 million anti-cancer compounds and can utilize computer modeling to develop specialized drugs to target and fight a particular cancer based on the specific genetic mutations in an individual's cancer.

Back row third from right Dr. Diane Simeone, director, Pancreatic Cancer Center U of M; lab personnel; and HDS fifth grade class

The children saw firsthand, under a microscope, the difference between normal and cancerous cells. They also saw fluorescent cancer cells. One student asked "If you know the environment the tumor cells like to grow in, why can't you change that environment so they can't grow anymore?" Another student confidently raised her hand and explained that the pancreas secretes insulin and is responsible for producing enzymes to break down food.

The HDS Student Council has raised over $1,000 for pancreatic cancer research by collecting deposit cans, food sales, receiving a $100 grant, a penny wagon, and additional donations. The children learned many lessons from their extremely successful fundraising efforts. The biggest lessons were you are never too young to practice tikun olam (repairing the world), everyone together can make a difference in this devastating disease, and anything is possible when people are passionate about a cause.

So what do a jelly fish and cancer cells have in common? By removing the protein from a jelly fish which enables it to glow in the dark and infusing it into cancer cells, researchers can better visualize the cells and their behavior. ■

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Humane Society visits ECC toddlers

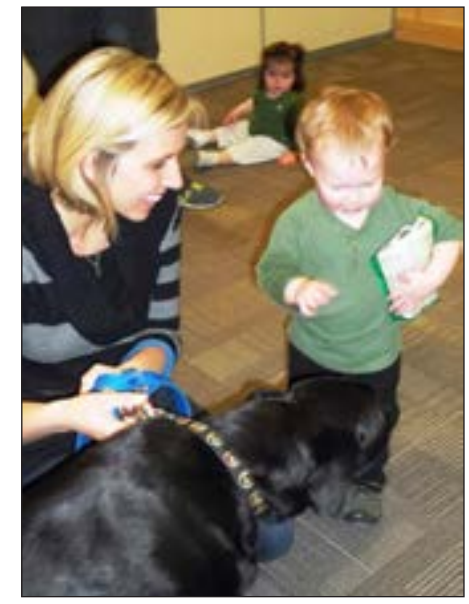
Susan Horowitz, special to the WJN

On April 3, Karen Patterson from the Huron Valley Humane Society, along with her dog Lucky, met with the children of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor Early Childhood Center. When the children entered the room with Lucky, they brought items they had collected to help the animals at HVHS. The children handed items they had collected to Patterson; but, many children wanted to give donations directly to the dog, showing that they understood just who they were helping. The children also had the opportunity to pet the dog, see some tricks, and throw a ball for Lucky to fetch.

Over the past few months, in a project designed and led by Bunny toddler teachers Nina Doigan and Courtney Payne, the toddlers collected wish list items for the Huron Valley Humane Society (HVHS). The project culminated with the visit from Karen and Lucky. The initial idea for this project was based on a combination of a teacher desire to promote tzedakah as well as the expressed interests of the children. "I have been feeling a personal obligation to be doing more tzedakah myself," said Doigan. "I then thought, 'Why can't the kids participate?'"

Following the child-centered philosophy of the ECC, Payne and Doigan then looked to the interests of the children to guide them in the specifics of planning this activity. "The children have been really interested in the emotions of each other and our plastic animals, so when Nina suggested that we do a tzedakah project I thought about the Humane Society," said Payne. "It would bring together both interests of the children." Payne and Doigan then invited the two other toddler classrooms to participate as well.

During the months of February and March, families brought in a variety of items to donate to the HVHS. When the toddler classrooms gathered together for weekly activities such as Havdalah and Kabbalat Shabbat, the children put their items in the collection boxes, talked about doing nice things for others (including pets) and sang about tzedakah. The collection process emphasized how the children could help the animals. "We talked about how by bringing in items for the animals we were helping to make them happy again, because some of them were really sad," said Payne. "The children really understood that by helping the animals we were making them happy."


ECC Humane Society visit

Connecting the concrete idea of collecting and donating items to more abstract emotions such as happy and sad also provided the toddlers with a lesson in emotional literacy. "Our kids are just starting to understand emotions and being hurt, so that's how we got them to understand such a complex idea," said Doigan. Ultimately, the toddlers learned a great deal about tzedakah with the added bonus of having fun while doing it. Through this experience the toddlers at the JCC ECC learned that tzedakah is a mitzvah in which even the youngest groups of learners can participate.

For more information about the JCC ECC, email ecc@jccfed.org, call 971-0990, or visit the website at www.jccannarbor.org. ■

Youth programs offer fun in the sun

Clara Silver, special to the WJN

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor Youth Department will explode with summer activity as Game Crazy ummer Fun Days and Camp Raanana begin. The overall focus of JCC summer youth activities is a combination of confidence building, skill building, and team building while having an exciting and engaging summer. Camp Raanana, now located at the beautiful Cedar Lake wooded campsite, offers campers traditional experiences like archery, swimming, boating, music, nature exploration, and crafts, as well as innovative options like adventure overnights, theme activities, and field trips. Every camper will also get a taste of the JCC Scout program that has been very successful this spring. Ethan Krasnow, director of Youth, Scouting, Camping Services, and Fun, says that, "Camp Raanana has the most fun planned than ever before, with "Special Fridays," multiple music programs, Mad Science, and lots of visitors from places like the Great Lakes Zoological Society. Every Friday we look forward to parents joining us by the lake to celebrate Shabbat."

For the week before and after Camp Raanana the JCC will partner with "Game Crazy." Game Crazy is an organization specializes in synthesizing technology and game concepts in innovative ways to engage young people to explore science, technology, engineering, and math, or "STEM" concepts. In addition to the Game Crazy activities, youth will also engage in traditional summer fun including swimming, snacks, sports, and other outdoor games.

Parents will find this summer's program full of excitement as well as flexibility with pre- and post-camp options and more. Spaces are still available for all the summer programs and families are encouraged to reserve space as soon as possible by contacting Kellie Cohoon at 971-0990 ext. 113 or kcohoon@jccfed.org. More information is available at www.jccannarbor.org. ■

50 years on, remembering the rally that launched the Soviet Jewry movement

By Rafael Medoff/JNS.org

We didn't know you couldn't organize a mass rally in four days, and sometimes if you don't know, then you just plunge ahead—and you do it." So says Glenn Richter, one of the organizers of the rally in New York City, 50 years ago on May 1, which launched the Soviet Jewry freedom movement.

In the spring of 1964, not many American Jews were paying attention to the plight of their three million coreligionists in the Soviet Union. But Yaakov (Jacob) Birnbaum and Morris Brafman were.

CREDIT: MOSHE MILNER/GPO.

A mass solidarity rally with Soviet Jewry at the Western Wall in Jerusalem on December 20, 1970

Their personal experiences had made them keenly aware of the commandment to not stand idly by as fellow Jews were persecuted. Birnbaum, 37, was born in Germany but raised in England, to which his parents fled from the Nazis. Brafman, 58, was a refugee from Austria. His nephew—prominent criminal defense attorney Ben Brafman—has written about how on Kristallnacht, his father, Sol, and uncle Morris "ran into a burning synagogue and rescued a Torah that would otherwise have been consumed by the flames." In 1960, the Brafman brothers, living in New York, established the first fledgling Soviet Jewry group, the American League for Russian Jews.

In April 1964, after reading reports in the press about the mistreatment of Soviet Jews—including the Kremlin's refusal to allow Jews to obtain matzahs for that year's Passover holiday—Birnbaum and Brafman decided to call a meeting on the campus of Columbia University to brainstorm about the situation. Glenn Richter, a Queens College sophomore, was one of those who attended.

Richter told JNS.org that about 150 students attended that meeting—a surprisingly large number, considering the Soviet Jewry issue was almost completely unknown at that point. "It was an amazing scene, kind of electrifying," he recalled. "We had the indignation of college students, we were outraged over an injustice and anxious to do something." One of the students suggested they hold a rally outside the Soviet Mission to the United Nations, on Manhattan's 67th street, on May 1—just four days away.

"Sometimes enthusiasm makes up for experience," Richter said. "Nobody in that room had the experience to know how difficult it would be to organize a serious rally in just four days—so nobody thought it was impossible. We just jumped into it."

Birnbaum was instantly attracted to the rally proposal because of the symbolism of holding it on May Day—the international holiday of the Communist movement. Rebuking the Soviets on their own holiday was exactly the kind of irony that he believed would attract public and media attention. And he was right.

"Symbolism was everything to us," Richter noted. "Many of us were active in the black civil rights movement, where we were constantly looking for symbolic ways to dramatize our cause. When we started organizing for Soviet Jewry, we borrowed heavily from what we learned in the civil rights movement." Richter himself had been a regular volunteer in the New York offices of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a leading civil rights activist group. Later, anti-Semitic black nationalists took over SNCC and many of its Jewish members departed. Some ended up in the Soviet Jewry movement.

"For four days, we ran around like crazy, pasting up posters, handing out leaflets on college campuses, 'talking up' the rally everywhere we could," Richter said. "We really had no idea how many people would show up. When the day arrived, we watched in amazement as the people started coming, and then more, and then more, until more than a thousand students were marching up and down the street. It was an incredible moment."

The large photograph and article that appeared in the next day's *New York Times*—on page 2, to the students' great surprise—reveals a lot about the young protesters. They are well-dressed, picketing in calm, orderly fashion, holding placards with well-thought-out slogans. The sign that is most prominent in the photo is remarkably informational: "Report from Russia: 1956—400 Synagogues; 1964—80 Synagogues—1970—?"

"We understood that it was, first of all, a battle for public opinion," Richter explained. "Nobody had heard of the issue. We had to educate the public. The slogans were carefully planned. The students were instructed to be on their best behavior. We were trying to make Soviet Jewry into an issue that Americans would take seriously."

That would not happen overnight. There would be decades of demonstrations and other protests—by the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, led by Birnbaum and Richter, by other activist groups, and eventually by the mainstream Jewish organizations. There would be battles in Congress and empty chairs set at Passover seders and American Jews sneaking into the USSR to help Soviet Jewish refuseniks. It would be one of the proudest chapters in American Jewish history. All that had to start somewhere—and it did, 50 years ago on May 1, with a handful of college students who did the impossible because they didn't know it couldn't be done. ■

Dr. Rafael Medoff is founding director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies.

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What is BDS?

David Shtulman, special to the WJN

The first anti-Israel boycott of Zionist goods produced in Mandatory Palestine was announced by the Arab League on December 2, 1945, long before Israel was established. It was broadened in 1948 to include all companies that do business with Israel until the US Congress made it illegal for any American company to cooperate with the boycott in 1976. The objective was to turn Israel into an international pariah long before the issues it purports to fight today came about as a result of the Six Day War in 1967.

The movement, inspired and generated by the 2001 UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban, bases itself on a number of very basic, general and widely used political slogans, deliberately couched to be reminiscent of the South African apartheid regime and to appeal to the genuine humanitarian sentiments of the grass roots groups to whom they direct their efforts. The aim is to manipulate well-meaning people who are generally unfamiliar with the Middle East by instilling in them an inherent bias against and hostility toward Israel.

The BDS movement is spearheaded by a small number of full-time and well-financed anti-Israel activists inspired by senior Palestinian figures such as Omar Barghouti, Mustafa Barghouti, Nabil Sha'at and others. The constant use of terms like apartheid, colonialism and racism in regards to Israeli society is designed to attach these attributes to Israel in the public mind.

Many well-meaning people who want only to support what they view as an oppressed people, including many Jews, have accepted the BDS narrative without fully understanding what drives it or what its goals are. However, many outspoken critics of Israeli policies who have a better understanding of the issues involved have spoken out forcefully against BDS.

***Judge Richard Goldstone,* chair of the 2009 UN Gaza fact-finding mission: New York Times, October 31, 2011**

"In Israel there is no apartheid. Nothing there comes close to the definition of apartheid under the 1998 Rome Statute: 'Inhumane acts… committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime.' Israeli Arabs—20 percent of Israel's population—vote, have political parties and representatives in the Knesset and occupy positions of acclaim, including on the Supreme Court. Arab patients lie alongside Jewish patients in Israeli hospitals receiving identical treatment.

… those who conflate the situations in Israel and the West Bank and liken both to old South Africa do a disservice to all who hope for justice and peace."

***Jeremy Ben-Ami,* Head of J Street, speaking to the Presbyterian Church USA, excerpts from the Huffington Post, July 2, 2012**

"Two years ago, the organization I head, J Street, was honored with an invitation to speak at a breakfast hosted by a Presbyterian USA peacemaking group—a long-time ally in the struggle for Middle East Peace. But we attended with heavy hearts.

A PCUSA committee had just offered an alarming and problematic Middle East study report referencing J Street as a source of inspiration. We explained then, and have reiterated ever since, that, in our view, the one-sided, extreme rhetoric that accompanies the Global BDS movement makes a mutually agreeable solution more difficult to achieve, not less.

… I would say to the Church's leaders as they again consider joining forces with the BDS movement, that the movement's rhetoric and tactics are not only a distraction, but a genuine threat to conflict resolution…. Such an approach encourages not reconciliation, but polarization.

… The Jewish pro-peace, pro-Israel community calls for an end to settlement expansion, the promotion of human rights, securing Israel's future as a Jewish democracy and establishing a thriving Palestine. We call for bold American and international diplomatic initiatives, starting with a push to define mutually agreed borders. But turning to tactics like BDS deepens divisions and fails to promote reconciliation."

***Roger Cohen:* excerpts from The BDS Threat New York Times, February 10, 2014**

"… I am a strong supporter of a two-state peace. The messianic idea of Greater Israel, occupying all the land between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River, must wither.

… Palestinians must accept the permanence of the State of Israel within the 1967 lines with equitable land swaps. Competitive victimhood should cede to collaborative viability for the nation states of the Jewish and the Palestinian peoples. Narratives and revealed truth do not a future make. They perpetuate the imprisoning past.

… I do not trust the BDS movement. Its stated aim is to end the occupation, secure "full equality" for Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, and fight for the right of return of all Palestinian refugees. The first objective is essential to Israel's future. The second is laudable. The third, combined with the second, equals the end of Israel as a Jewish state. This is the hidden agenda of BDS.

… A single state cannot mark its Day of Independence and Day of Catastrophe on the same date. One state, however conceived, equals the end of Israel as a Jewish state, the core of the Zionist idea. Jews must not allow this to happen. Trust your neighbor? Been there, tried that…."

BDS is not a social justice movement. It is a deliberate effort to bring about an end to the State of Israel disguised as a Palestinian equality movement. The Palestinians living in Israel as Israeli citizens deserve full equality within Israel. Palestinians who do not live within Israel and do not seek citizenship in a Jewish state, deserve full equality as citizens of Palestine in an area whose boundaries are internationally recognized and mutually agreed upon through a negotiated process. People who want justice encourage negotiations and normalization as a path to reconciliation. People who want victory encourage BDS.

The University of Michigan Student Government was correct to give the BDS debate a full airing and correct in voting against it by a large margin. How can anyone believe that a debate causing so much tension on an American campus can ever be a path to peace? ■

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Kansas hate crime didn't emerge from a vacuum

By Ben Cohen/JNS.org

When you look at the image of Frazier Glenn Cross, AKA Glenn Miller, the shooter who cold-bloodedly murdered three Christians in a bloody eve-of-Passover spree at two Jewish community buildings in Overland Park, Kan., what do you see?

I'll tell you what I see. The dead-eyed stare, the pasty, blotched skin and lousy teeth, the unkempt facial hair—this is exactly the kind of face we associate with anti-Semitic and racist thuggery. In the 20th century, Cross could have been a concentration camp guard, wearing his ignorant, vulgar sneer as he shoved his Jewish victims into a gas chamber, screaming barely literate, anti-Semitic epithets along the way.

As we mourn the dead, and agonize over the fact that security at Jewish institutions becomes more vulnerable when Jewish holidays draw near, we comfort ourselves by saying that such exemplary specimens of the "Master Race" as Cross are a rarity. Neo-Nazis are at the fringe of the fringe, most of them don't have the guts to go beyond harassing their enemies on social networks, and the odd individuals who do engage in violence unfortunately have easy access to guns. What this means is that Jews and other minorities have to occasionally shoulder atrocities like the one in Kansas. It absolutely does not mean that America is an anti-Semitic country, or that such attacks are a prelude to greater persecution.

One might add that the wider community's reaction to the Overland Park murders showcased a humble, hard-working, tolerant America at its best. We suffer and we pull through—just as we pulled through the shootings at Jewish Community Centers in Los Angeles in 1999 and Seattle in 2006. Just as French Jews pulled through 2012 murders by an Islamist of a rabbi and three beautiful children at a Jewish school in Toulouse. Just as Jews in Israel overcame the enormous pain that accompanied the Palestinian bombing of a Passover seder, which claimed the lives of 30 people, at a Netanya hotel in 2002.

CREDIT: FACEBOOK.

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City

But something is missing. By overly focusing on punks like Frazier Cross, there's a danger that we ignore those elements in our broader culture that sustain and inspire them.

Look at some of the posts that Cross left on various neo-Nazi and white supremacist bulletin boards, and you'll see what I mean. Amidst his hate-drenched rants against Jews, he warmly recommended an article by "Jew journalist" Max Blumenthal, whom he complimented for exposing Israel's "attempt... to buy the presidential election for the neo-con, war-mongering republican establishment... the k*kes simply do not trust a lame-duck black president with the name Hussein." (Incidentally, it's not unheard of for Nazis to recommend certain Jewish authors—Hitler himself reportedly described Otto Weininger, a Viennese Jewish philosopher who lambasted the modern "Jewish" era, as a rare example of a Jew he admired.)

It's not an accident that today's Nazis are attracted to left-wing, viscerally anti-Zionist writers like Blumenthal. Both share the view that the so-called "Israel Lobby" drove the U.S. into foreign wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Both believe that politicians kowtow to Jewish interests because they fear the costs of not doing so. And both are convinced that the type of "Jewish supremacism" practiced in Israel makes a nonsense of American Jewish appeals for tolerance and understanding.

Two years ago, Blumenthal mocked the Department of Homeland Security for describing Jews as a community facing "special risks."

"It's clear what's going on here," he said, in a nod towards undue Jewish political influence. Blumenthal has also actively promoted the idea that Judaism itself is a hateful religion, a slander propounded by his Israeli collaborator, Yossi Gurvitz, who has stated that "Rabbinical Judaism is a Judaism that hates humans." On Twitter, meanwhile, Blumenthal has used his own account to retweet the rantings of one David Benedetti, who taunted a Jewish user with Holocaust imagery, saying "your grandmother also made a nice lampshade."

Now that the Kansas atrocity underlines that Jews do, in fact, face serious risks, Blumenthal has shifted tack, writing on the anti-Semitic website Mondoweiss on the alleged similarities between Frazier Cross's Nazi ideology and Zionism. Elsewhere on the same website, which receives part of its funding from conservative businessman Ron Unz, another contributor, Annie Robbins, wondered aloud whether Kansas was an Israeli conspiracy.

Why does any of this matter? Left-wing anti-Zionists are increasingly regarded as acceptable

Continued on page 22

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Report from AIPAC 2014

Florence Gerber, special to the WJN

Fourteen thousand people from all 50 states and many foreign countries attended the AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) conference in Washington, DC, March 2–4. AIPAC is an advocate for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship

In keeping with AIPAC's bipartisan approach to congress and the Obama administration, there were speakers from both sides of the aisle: Secretary of State John Kerry; Secretary of the Treasury Jack Lew; Senator Charles Schumer (D); Senator John McCain (R); House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R); House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D), and Senator Robert Menendez (D) to name a few. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and various Israeli figures also spoke.

CREDIT: AIPAC.

Benjamin Netanyahu and AIPAC President Michael Kessen at AIPAC conference

AIPAC did not rate or endorse candidates for office. It worked with both Republicans and Democrats. Its board members have been active in politics and come from both political parties. During the Obama presidency, the AIPAC presidents have been Democrats.

The central issue of the conference was Iran and its pursuit of the nuclear bomb. In addition there were dozens of breakout sessions featuring experts on all sorts of subjects. One panel included Dennis Ross and Elliot Abrams discussing Iran and the implications of a nuclear Iran for Israel, the Middle East and the world. Topics ranged from energy, the Middle East, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, India and Israel, and missile defense.

Besides politics, Israeli high tech firms show-cased inventions: eye glasses that enable the blind to see; small sensing devices that give pictures of bad guys behind brick walls; missile defense and many others.

At the close of the conference delegates lobbied senators and representative from all 50 states to urge them to support a policy such that as part of the final agreement Iran must dismantle its illicit nuclear program so that it cannot develop or build a nuclear weapon. Another issue was to urge enhancement of cooperation between the U.S. and Israel and designate the Jewish State a "major strategic partner."

David and Joshua Nacht, Marvin and Florence Gerber, and Tillie Shames with 22 students from the University of Michigan Hillel represented Washtenaw County at the conference.

Show your support for Israel by attending next year's conference March 1–3, 2015, at the Convention Center in Washington, DC. For information, contact Avi Davidoff at (312) 253-8975 or adavidoff@aipac.org or www.aipac.org. ■

Amid *Cosmos* return, remembering famed Jewish astronomer Carl Sagan

By Robert Gluck/JNS.org

Carl Sagan fans old and new have been gazing at their televisions in awe as host Dr. Neil Degrasse Tyson's resurrection of the science epic *Cosmos* takes them on a journey from the Big Bang, to microscopic one-celled organisms, to the ascent of man, to beyond the stars and planets.

The return of *Cosmos*—which launched in March and runs for 13 episodes on the Fox network, ending June 2—provides an opportune time to remember Sagan, the show's Jewish creator.

An American astronomer, astrophysicist, cosmologist, and author, Sagan was born to Reform Jews. According to science writer William Poundstone, author of *Carl Sagan: A Life in the Cosmos*, Sagan's family celebrated the High Holidays and his parents made sure Carl knew the Jewish traditions.

"Both of his parents instilled in him this drive to get ahead in America, and that is something he kept all his life," Poundstone told JNS.org. "It may have been one factor in this idea that he not only wanted to be a successful astronomer, but [also] to write books, to become a celebrity and an entrepreneur. His mother particularly instilled that in him."

Born in Brooklyn to Samuel Sagan, an immigrant garment worker from Russia, and Rachel Molly Gruber, a housewife from New York, Carl was named in honor of Rachel's biological mother Chaiya Clara. Both Carl and his sister say their father was not particularly religious, but their mother believed in God, was active in her synagogue, and served only kosher meat.

From an early age, Sagan was seized with the mission of searching for life on other worlds, a quest that would dominate his entire professional career. Poundstone recounts how this quest continuously drove Sagan, from his adolescent chemistry-set accidents, to his colorful academic career, to his professional work on the Viking and Voyager NASA missions, nuclear disarmament, *Cosmos,* and Robert Zemeckis's film *Contact* (starring Jodi Foster).

In 1986, the World Jewish Congress (WJC) presented Sagan with the Nahum Goldmann Medal, according to WJC North American press officer Eve Kessler. The medal is awarded to distinguished individuals for their contributions to universal humanitarian causes and actions benefiting the Jewish people.

At that time Sagan, gave an address titled "The Final Solution of the Human Problem: Adolf Hitler and Nuclear War."

"If the United States and the Soviet Union permit a nuclear war to break out, they would have retroactively lost the Second World War and made that sacrifice meaningless," Sagan said after accepting the Goldmann medal. "If we take seriously our obligation to the tens of millions who perished in World War II, we must rid the planet of the blight of nuclear weapons."

Also in 1986, Sagan received the Shalom Center's first Brit HaDorot (Covenant of the Generations) Peace Award. Shared with Boston's Jewish Coalition for a Peaceful World, the award was presented to Jews who work to prevent a nuclear Holocaust.

"We had relatives who were caught up in the Holocaust," Sagan wrote. "Hitler was not a popular fellow in our household. On the other hand, I was fairly insulated from the horrors of the war."

In his 1996 book *The Demon-Haunted World*, Sagan included his memories of this conflicted period when his family dealt with the realities of the war in Europe, but tried to prevent it from undermining his optimistic spirit.

CREDIT: JPL VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Sagan with a model of a NASA Viking lander

"Carl fulfilled his mother's unfulfilled dreams," Poundstone told JNS.org.

Sagan spent most of his career as a professor of astronomy at Cornell University, where he directed the Laboratory for Planetary Studies. He published more than 600 scientific papers and articles and was the author, co-author or editor of more than 20 books. He advocated for scientific skeptical inquiry and promoted the search for extra-terrestrial intelligence. But it was perhaps Sagan's personality—not just his scientific credentials—that popularized "Cosmos" on the PBS television network.

"One of the reasons the original *Cosmos* series worked was Sagan was one of the few scientists who could wear jeans and a turtle neck and look comfortable," Poundstone said. "He did have this vibe as someone who was cool and a member of the youth culture. That was a big part of the show's appeal."

Cornell University's press release at the time of Sagan's death called him the world's greatest popularizer of science, as he reached millions of people through newspapers, magazines, and television broadcasts. *Cosmos*—seen by more than 500 million people in 60 countries—became the most watched series in public-television history. The accompanying book, *Cosmos* (1980), was on The New York Times bestseller list for 70 weeks and was the best-selling science book ever published in English.

"Carl was a candle in the dark," said Yervant Terzian, chairman of Cornell's astronomy department. "He was the best science educator in the world this century. He touched hundreds of millions of people and inspired young generations to pursue the sciences."

Sagan predicted that the surface of Venus was 900 degrees Fahrenheit, a finding confirmed by the Mariner 2 robotic space probe.

"He was the architect of the greenhouse effect model of Venus's atmosphere," Poundstone told JNS.org. "Sagan's model was a radical thing at the time but it was dramatically confirmed by the first NASA space probe. It was an incredible achievement. Sagan probably couldn't have dreamed at the time that the greenhouse effect would be important in the current debate we're having about whether human produced carbon dioxide is changing our climate. His work was important to that."

Promoted as a program that shows how matter, over billions of years, transforms into consciousness, the past and present versions of *Cosmos* speak to the joy one can find in nature, science, and perhaps—as Sagan believed—the search for intelligent life in space.

Sagan was enthusiastic about sending messages to possible extraterrestrials. The Pioneer Plaques were a pair of gold anodized aluminum plaques placed on board the 1972 Pioneer 10 and 1973 Pioneer 11 NASA space probes, featuring a pictorial message in case either was intercepted by extraterrestrial life. The plaques show the nude figures of a human male and female along with several symbols designed to provide information about the origin of the spacecraft.

CREDIT NASA JPL VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Carl Sagan (center), Bruce Murray, and Louis Friedman, of The Planetary Society with journalist Harry Ashmore

The Voyager Golden Record, a much more complex and detailed message using state-of-the-art media, was attached to the Voyager spacecraft launched in 1977.

"The Voyager Golden Record is often credited with spurring the degree of interest we have in world music," Poundstone said. "They compiled this wonderful sampler of all the world's musical traditions, which was something you didn't get so much then but you do now."

Poundstone identifies three elements that define Sagan's legacy.

"He was a great, poetic writer and he was able to communicate that on screen," he said. "Second, he tends to be underrated as a scientist, but he did incredible things including the greenhouse effect on Venus and a lot of work on Mars. He was the first to show that the dark areas were high mountains and not low seas. Third, he was a great advocate of the skeptic movement, the idea that you have to have evidence for a claim." ■

British BDS countered by grassroots movements and a touch of humor

By Jenni Frazer/JNS.org

In August 2012, a Christian and a Jew bumped into each other in Brighton, the languid seaside resort on Britain's south coast that has become the hub of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) protests at the local Ecostream store. The Israeli-owned shop has attracted weekly demonstrations from the BDS crowd, angry that products made over the Green Line should be sold in the United Kingdom.

Simon Cobbs, a passionate Zionist who had lived in Israel for three years by the time he was 17, was walking past the Ecostream store when he spotted BDS demonstrators inside the shop. By chance, he also spotted Daniel Laurence, who lived in the apartment upstairs and was an equally passionate Christian Zionist. Cobbs and Laurence, like bouncers, threw the BDS demonstrators out of the store. "Then we turned to each other and said, see you next week? I'll bring some friends," says Cobbs.

BDS scored a notable victory in London where sustained protests forced the Israeli cosmetics store, Ahava, to close down in the summer of 2011. But in Brighton, a different story emerged. It was what local pro-Israel activist Dr. Winston Pickett describes as akin to the moment from the movie "Network" when the famed British-born actor Peter Finch says, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take this any more."

Sussex Friends of Israel (SFI), born from that first accidental meeting between Cobbs and Laurence, has grown so successfully that it employs a part-time director, Neil Duncanson. The group now has 6,200 "likes" on Facebook and 1,200 followers on Twitter. Most of its supporters are local Jews, often people who had dropped out of mainstream activities but were galvanized by the anti-Ecostream protests that have frequently degenerated into anti-Semitic rhetoric and abuse. At least four grandmothers make regular appearances on the picket lines. SFI's calling card has been most successful when—candidly—it has mocked the BDS protesters with cheerful humor and a friendly local saxophonist playing for the entertainment of Brighton's Saturday shoppers.

CREDIT: OREN TEICHMANN/SUSSEX FRIENDS OF ISRAEL.

"Pies Against Lies" protest at the Israeli-owned Ecostream store in England

While the BDS movement tries to hit Israel in the wallet, SFI's anti-BDS efforts hone in on the stomach. A recent SFI campaign has been the "Pies Against Lies" initiative. Others have been "Cakes Against Hate" and "Bagels Against Bigotry."

"We ran an event saying 'we bring pies, they bring lies' and offered food to the passers-by," Duncanson says. "For me, the best part of the day is after the shouting stops and the ordinary person in the street has the chance to examine our leaflets and material, and ask questions." At that point, according to Duncanson, those on the fence often reject BDS.

SFI now has a regular turnout of at least 30 people outside Ecostream, rising to about 70 for its foodie initiatives. BDS, by contrast, has advertised parades in Brighton that have failed to get off the ground. "At the beginning of March, they had a march which consisted of just eight people," says Duncanson. "They had another [recently] which attracted only two people, young Libyan women. We said that they had two marches in March which weren't marches."

SFI's model of undermining the BDS crowd with humor and education is attracting attention from all over Britain. "So far," says Duncanson, "we have had inquiries from Inverness, Canterbury, Oxford, Hertfordshire, Portsmouth, Bournemouth, and north London."

While SFI is a grassroots organization, the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland (ZF) is a venerable Anglo-Jewish institution established in 1899, but it too is heavily invested in fighting the boycotters. ZF's chairman, South African-born Paul Charney, says the group is starting to understand BDS—and how to deal with it—better.

"There is at least one category of protesters that is anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic, and we know we can't change their minds," he says. "But we can negate the lies, and these people don't get a free ride, they don't get an unchallenged voice. We also have a role in educating those people who are willing to listen, particularly within the Jewish community."

Charney describes the ZF's most difficult area as "actually educating Jewish youth and trying to rid them of the perception that because we are challenging boycotters, we are right-wing."

"We are not [right-wing]," he says. "We are negating falsehoods and putting forward positive stories about Israel, in medical developments, inventions, research, etc. We feel we have something to say to normal right-minded people, and we also give [Jewish] people courage by providing a physical presence at some of the nastier protests."

Most of those engaged in fighting the

Continued on next page

Yom HaZikaron: Israeli families discuss what it means to lose a soldier, a son, a sibling

By Maayan Jaffe/JNS.org

Some 22,000 Israeli soldiers have died since the establishment of the Jewish state, including 40 soldiers between March 2013 and March 2014, according to the Israel Defense Forces.

"We in Israel are fighting—and dying—on behalf of every Jew in the world. … We are maintaining a safe haven for every Jew to escape to. Jews in the Diaspora live safer lives and hold their heads higher because Israel and its army exists," said Chantal Belzberg, executive vice chairman of OneFamily, an organization dedicated to the rehabilitation of Israeli victims of terror attacks and their families.

On Yom HaZikaron, the fourth day of the Hebrew month of Iyar (sundown on May 4, 2014), Israelis will pay tribute to the country's fallen soldiers in a solemn day of mourning. On its official Memorial Day, Israel also mourns the loss of civilians who were killed as a result of terrorism.

Among the soldiers killed during these past 12 months was 20-year-old Gavriel Kobi, a combat soldier in the Givati Brigade, who was shot and killed on Sept. 22, 2013 by a Palestinian sniper while on guard duty outside Hebron's Cave of the Patriarchs. Also killed were 18-year-old Eden Atias, stabbed in the neck on Nov. 11, 2013 while on a bus in the northern Israeli city of Afula, and 31-year-old Shlomo Cohen, a Petty Officer 1st Class in the Israeli Navy, who was fatally shot by a Lebanese sniper while driving near the Israel-Lebanon border fence in an unarmored military vehicle. Cohen was on operational duty on Dec. 15, 2013 at the time of his death.

CREDIT: PROVIDED PHOTO.

Cpl. Netanel Yahalomi, 20

OneFamily's Belzberg said that when a young soldier is killed, it has a "radically shocking, traumatic and debilitating" effect on the soldier's parents and family.

"Siblings suffer tremendously, but not as deeply as a mother losing her son, the son she bore, nursed, dressed, walked to school, took to his school's football practice and whose game she watched proudly," Belzberg told JNS.org. "Siblings suffer because they don't just lose a brother; they also lose their mom and dad. … They wallow in their grief and have no energy to care for the living. The dead child occupies a lot more time than a living one."

Yehudit Rotenberg, whose son Sgt. Nadav Rotenberg, 20, was killed January 7, 2011 by a stray Israel Defense Forces mortar shell in an incident near the Gaza border, still remembers the day she learned of her son's death. The family had seen a report on a border incident in which four soldiers were injured.

"It was a Friday night," Rotenberg recalled. "We learned of the incident at around 6:10 p.m. I was worried, but I didn't believe he could have died. They said there were injuries on the news. Eating Shabbat dinner was very stressful; it was hard to eat the food. … We kept thinking he would call, that he would tell us he was OK. … Then there was a knock at the door, and we saw an army uniform collar through the window."

CREDIT: PROVIDED PHOTO.

Sgt. Nadav Rotenberg, 20

She said the hardship, the emotion, came quickly.

Avital Yahalomi has a similar story. Her brother, 20-year-old Cpl. Netanel Yahalomi, was killed on Sept. 21, 2012 while on patrol along the Israeli border with Egypt. Three heavily armed terrorists attempting to infiltrate Israel attacked the soldiers. One terrorist was wearing a suicide belt, which went off during the battle.

Cpl. Yahalomi was a deeply religious solider and a Zionist; three Jewish books were found on his body after his death. His sister, Avital, told JNS.org that her brother dreamed of being the strongest and best combat soldier. He was upset when he learned that because he wore glasses, which reduced his profile, he could not join the unit of his choice, but instead would be part of the Artillery Corps. This knowledge, however, put his family more at ease. They knew he was on the Egyptian border, but they assumed that he was safe there.

"In general, we have peace with Egypt," Avital said, noting that her brother was careful about what he told the family, never wanting to worry them.

On the afternoon of Cpl. Yahalomi's death, his family was preparing for Shabbat at their home in Nof Ayalon, near Modi'in. When an IDF representative came to deliver the news, then 9-year-old Yitzchak opened the door.

Continued on next page

BDS countered, continued from previous page

boycott campaign acknowledge that the front line is on college campuses. University of Oxford student Jonathan Hunter, UK campus director for the pro-Israel group StandWithUs, says there is a growing tide of delegitimization of Israel on every campus.

CREDIT: OREN TEICHMANN/SUSSEX FRIENDS OF ISRAEL

A recent event of Sussex Friends of Israel's "Pies Against Lies" initiative

"It is very loud, inaccurate, offensive, and intimidating," he says. In fact, the anti-Israel voice is so loud that it is difficult to find students who are ready to speak out against it. On March 25, only two percent of the student body at King's College, a constituent college of the University of London, voted on a controversial anti-Israel motion that pledges affiliation to the national BDS campaign. The motion initially passed, but was overturned by the school's student union on April 1.

Sami Steinbock, president of the about-to-be-launched Israel Society at King's, has run a campaign against the boycotters. He confirms that there is "no institutional discrimination" at King's, but says it is "certainly uncomfortable to be in a campus atmosphere that votes on such a divisive and poisonous [divestment] motion."

"In terms of Israeli students we have a fair amount, a few participated in our campaign; others are too scared to even identify as Israeli, given this motion, and are therefore staying as far away as possible," Steinbock says.

If things are bad for pro-Israel students at King's, Hunter says an even darker campus is Sheffield, in the north of England. The Sheffield student union's education officer is in charge of enforcing its "end the Israeli occupation" policy, and there was a recent attempt to put through a policy that would have forced the student-led Jewish Society to boycott Israel, says Hunter.

"The problem is that people who are applying to university are less likely to want to attend somewhere where there is a strong BDS presence, which means that there are smaller Jewish societies on campus and less impetus to try to overturn the BDS initiative," Hunter says. "In [the Scottish city of] Dundee, for example, there are only two Jewish students. But even on bigger campuses people don't want to draw attention to themselves by opposing what has become the majority opinion."

On the horizon are new challenges for Britain's pro-Israel activists, such as the recent decision of the Royal Institute of British Architects (and its separate Scottish counterpart) to boycott the Israel Architects' Union and push for the Jewish state's ejection from the International Union of Architects. There are also fights against supermarket chains that refuse to stock Israeli produce, and against campaigns to persuade local authorities not to use Israeli inventions—such as the latest initiative against Arad Water and its state-of-the-art water meters. The way the Zionist Federation's Charney sees it, the stakes are high.

"BDS is not a battle that we can win, but it's one we can't afford to lose," he says. ■

Yom HaZikaron, continued from previous page

"He didn't know what was happening," Avital said. "He thought they were coming to kick us out of our home and he called to mother. My father was in the shower. … One by one we learned what happened. Then we all just sat on the couch and we cried and cried. This is something that never goes away. It will never go away."

"When you say goodbye to your son as he gets on the bus with all of the new soldiers, you've offered up your son as a potential sacrifice to the country," explained Belzberg. "Your heart sinks. The worst may happen. But most parents say to themselves, 'It won't happen to me.'"

She added, "Then, in the middle of the night, there's a knock at the door. … Three soldiers stare sadly into your eyes. Your worst nightmare has happened. Your son is dead. You scream and your whole body shakes. You collapse."

But you have no choice except to go on. Today, Nadav Rotenberg's younger brother is in his second year in the army. The first year, said Yehudit Rotenberg, "I worried a lot." Yet she is also very proud.

"These are brave children," said Rotenberg. "Even though I lost a child, I still believe the army is very important and we have to support it."

Avital Yahalomi has similar ideas. "I am happy to be Israeli, even though it cost me so much. … I plan to stay here, to raise my children here, to send them to the army to defend my country," she said.

"Yom HaZikaron is about remembering a larger family, about saying to each bereaved family that their child, the apple of their eye, is remembered," said Rebecca Fuhrman, manager of marketing and communications for OneFamily. "Their loss is our loss."

For a full listing of soldiers (in Hebrew) who died between last Yom HaZikaron and this one, visit http://www.izkor.gov.il/Sipurim_Search.aspx. For a list of soldiers and victims of terror killed in 2013, visit https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Terrorism/victims.html#2013. ■

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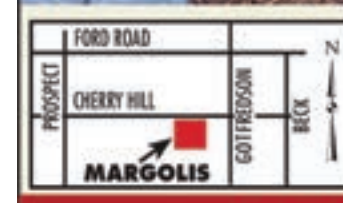

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Analysis: The conflicting agendas of Israel's Jewish Home party

By Moran Stern/JNS.org

As both Haredi political parties in Israel—United Torah Judaism and Shas—are currently in the opposition, the Jewish Home party is the only representative of religion in the governing coalition. To address its multifaceted objectives, the party engages in several fronts that often come into conflict with one another. Trying to carry the heavy burden of religion alone, members of the Jewish Home are often adopting positions on religious matters in order to avoid seeming too stringent for their nationalist modern-Orthodox constituency or less religious than the Haredim.

Formed in 2008, the Jewish Home is the reincarnation of several mergers and splits between different religious-Zionist parties. The roots of the party can be traced to the Mizrahi party (acronym for Merkaz Ruhani or Spiritual Center), which was formed by Rabbi Ya'akov Reines in 1902 and played an active role in the Zionist Congress. Today, the Jewish Home represents the worldview of mainly modern-Orthodox, religious-Zionist Israelis as well as some non-religious nationalists.

Tensions among proponents of religious Zionism have been endemic to the movement since its inception. As Zionists, they rebelled against the old political structure of the Jewish community in the diaspora and sought to establish Jewish self-determination in the land of Israel. As a byproduct of traditional Judaism, they tried to synthesize their national vision with Orthodox Judaism, which opposed the establishment of a Jewish polity in the land of Israel before the arrival of the messiah, and therefore considered Zionism heretic. Such tensions have led to ongoing rivalries within Mizrahi, resulting in the departure of some of the movement's members to form the Haredi party Agudat Israel in 1912.

Before the first elections for the Jewish governmental institutions in Mandatory Palestine in 1920, the representatives of Agudat Israel threatened to secede from any decision-making process if women were allowed to vote. According to historian Anita Shapira, the Mizrahi party, in whose institutions women voted and were elected, might have found itself as the sole representative of religion in pre-state Israel (Yishuv). The Yishuv's leadership was concerned that an intra-Jewish conflict would result in a social rupture, compelling the Mizrahi to take extreme positions on religious matters in order to avoid seeming less religious than Agudat Israel.

After the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, tensions between the religious Zionists and the Haredim continued. The Haredim consider themselves as the truly pious Jews and perceive the religious Zionists as transgressing Jews because of their casual dress, small kippot, interaction with secular society, patriotism, military service, and more lenient approach to religious commandments. Sharing the view of most Israelis, the religious Zionists perceive the Haredim as loafers, religiously coercive, and unproductive citizens.

As the only religious party in the current coalition, the Jewish Home attempts to strike a balance between these mutually hostile views by trying to adhere to all sides. The result is an ideological overexpansion that exhausts the party and positions it in a political limbo. Owing much of its success in the 2013 elections to its promise to promote social equality and a "friendlier" Judaism in state institutions as an alternative to the Haredi version, the Jewish Home is pressured to meet the expectations of its modern-Orthodox and non-religious nationalists' constituencies. Simultaneously, however, the party's ties to traditional Judaism have remained deep.

As a nationalist party, the Jewish Home seeks to meet its voters' demand for greater social equality in the forms of Haredi conscription to the military, cutting state funds to Haredi institutions, and breaking the Haredi monopoly over religious-personal matters. As a religious party, it is pressured to demonstrate a commitment to the rabbinic study of Torah in Israel by securing state funding to Haredi yeshivas and maintaining a considerable number of exemptions from military service for young Haredi men.

The Jewish Home took an active role in the Equality in Burden law, recently passed legislation that aims at conscripting Haredi men to a military or national service. But in negotiating the law with its coalition partners, the party secured the special arrangement of many religious-Zionist and national-religious yeshiva students. Under the new law, the service of these students has been extended by a single month to 17 months, in comparison to the 36 months that secular Israelis must serve. Nevertheless, these students will continue to enjoy a soldier's full financial benefits for 4.5 years.

CREDIT: MATI MILSTEIN/THE ISRAEL PROJECT

Naftali Bennett, leader of Israel's Jewish Home party

Recently, the party supported a new law that allows couples to choose the rabbinate that will register their marriage, even if it is not located in the municipality where the couple resides. The main purpose of the law is to incentivize better rabbinic services and provide additional review on problematic cases of conversions. Furthermore, holding the portfolio of the Ministry of Religious Services, the Jewish Home has demonstrated an unprecedented support for the recognition of the Conservative and Reform denominations in Israel, securing them some state funding on the municipal level.

But traditionally, all religious-Zionist parties—the Jewish Home included—seek to further cement the Orthodox Chief Rabbinate's monopoly over marriage, divorce, and conversion in Israel. Despite its flirtations with the liberal denominations, the Jewish Home will fiercely oppose any non-Orthodox jurisdiction on personal matters in Israel.

As part of its coalition agreement, the party has the right to veto any legislation that concerns religion and state. For example, the party is expected to oppose a new bill that aims to make the process of converting to Judaism easier, by increasing the number of rabbis authorized to approve conversion and the number of religious courts. Thus, while the Jewish Home advocates a bureaucratic reform to polish the Chief Rabbinate's poor reputation and make its services more appealing to Israelis, it will outright object to any changes that involve a more flexible interpretation of Jewish law in religious courts.

The convergence of these conflicting ends, the party's average electoral size, and its status as the only representative of religion in the coalition forces the Jewish Home party to position itself at the complicated crossroad of traditionalism, modernism, nationalism, and liberalism. Thus, while the Jewish Home played an active role in recent legislation concerning the status of religion, its multiple agendas prevent it from leading structural changes in the relationship between religion and state in Israel. As history may suggest, despite their ideological animosity with non-Zionist Haredi Orthodoxy, religious-Zionist parties operate more comfortably when their Haredi rivals are in the coalition to help them carry the heavy burden of religion in Israel. "■

Moran Stern is a lecturer at Georgetown University's Program for Jewish Civilization in the School of Foreign Service. Follow him on Twitter @ MoranStern.

At Jewish state's 66th birthday, Bedouin seek to better integrate into Israeli society

By Maayan Jaffe/JNS.org

I am certain the world will judge the Jewish state by what it will do with the Arabs," said Chaim Weizmann, Israel's first president, in December 1947, just months before the state's founding.

For anyone who reads the news, Weizmann's words ring true. Despite the wide array of contributions Israel makes to the world, the media and other forms of public attention inevitably focus on the country's shortcomings and on the situation faced by its Arab minority.

Israeli Arabs make up 20.6 percent of the Israeli population, but they contribute only eight percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), according to Israel's Authority of Economic Development of Minorities Sector. Some 51.4 percent of Arab families live below the poverty line (compared with 15 percent of Jewish families). Each year, only 63 percent of Arab youngsters reach 12th grade, compared with 93 percent of their Jewish peers.

Among Israeli Arabs, the Bedouin number 250,000 and experience the highest unemployment rate. Bedouin society lacks a strong educational system, supports forced marriages of underage girls, and places cultural restrictions on women working outside the home.

CREDIT: DAVID SHANKBONE VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Rahat, the largest Bedouin city in Israel

At the same time, there are programs like the Center for Bedouin Studies and Development at Ben-Gurion University (BGU) that are beginning to change Bedouin lives for the better. When the center was founded in 1997, there were no Bedouin women studying at BGU.

"If you saw a person fall, wouldn't you help them get up?" asked Robert H. Arnow, who helped found the center and over the years invested significantly in scholarships and support services for Bedouin students, with an emphasis on women. Today, more than 60 percent of the 268 Bedouin students seeking their first degree at BGU are women. "That's how I pictured the Bedouin community. Someone needed to help them," Arnow said.

Similarly, the Arab Jewish Center for Equality, Empowerment and Cooperation - Negev Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development (AJEEC-NISPED) runs programs that meet real-time needs while leveraging existing resources. The organization offers training programs for Bedouin women, combining assertiveness training with entrepreneurship and vocational training, said Vivian Silver, its former co-executive director and now an active volunteer.

One of the organization's greatest successes was the transformation of the hot lunch program in the Bedouin village of Hura from an Israel-run and Jewish-contracted program into one that employs 17 Bedouin women. Daily, the program makes 6,000 hot lunches and runs a professional and immaculate kitchen.

In another instance, AJEEC-NISPED trained a number of Bedouin women from several villages to be photographers, videographers who could record celebrations such as weddings. It also trained hairdressers.

"I think most women want to change. … They want an education, they want opportunities, they want freedom of movement—and slowly, it is happening," Silver said.

Dr. Rania Okby, the first female Bedouin physician in the world, agrees. Okby represents the convergence of two worlds: ancient Bedouin tradition and modern Israeli society. She was

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On Yom Ha'atzmaut, falafel takes a back seat to barbecue

By Deborah Fineblum/JNS.org

For one day in the spring, the humble falafel is all but forgotten as Israelis fire up their grills for some serious meat-eating. In that way, Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day), which falls on the fifth day of the Hebrew-calendar month Iyar, is not all that different from its American counterpart, the Fourth of July.

On this holiday, marking Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion's announcement of Israel's independence at the stroke of midnight on May 14, 1948, you'll find musical and theatrical performances on street corners; Israeli dancing and sing-alongs, speeches, and classic Israeli movies shown on TV and radio; and Israeli flags fluttering from windows and balconies and car antennae. Sheet cakes are decorated with the blue and white colors of Israel's flag, and the air is filled with the smoke of barbecue grills.

New olim (immigrants) are celebrating not only Israel's freedom to exist as an independent Jewish state, but also their own transformation into Israeli citizens, with those from the U.S. trading in their July 4 Hebrew National hot dog for a Fifth of Iyar all-Israeli kabob.

"The first time a new citizen celebrates Yom Ha'atzmaut, they are exhilarated that only a year earlier they were dreaming of making Israel their home and now they are a full part of their Jewish homeland," says Rachel Berger, who heads up the Post-Aliyah Department of Nefesh B'Nefesh, which brings thousands of new olim to Israel each year.

Not everyone will be lighting a personal grill on the holiday. Business is booming for Israeli restaurants on Yom Ha'atzmaut, with families taking

CREDIT: YONATAN SINDEL/FLASH90.

A picnic on Israel s 64th Independence Day in 2012

advantage of the return of spring. Many workers use the day off to go on tiyulim, or day trips. In Zichron Yaakov, at the Italian restaurant Adama Bistro, manager Dganit Azolai expects the usually popular pasta specialties to be largely ignored in favor of meats of every kind, especially beef on the grill or other barbecue items.

As a variation on the meat theme, the kosher Chinese restaurant Chon Lee in Ashdod finds its annual Yom Ha'atzmaut favorite to be crispy Chinese duck, says owner Jung Lee, who has now added the Hebrew and English languages to his native Mandarin.

Boaz Fisafasavich, whose Beit HaStek in Haifa attracts an international crowd hailing from France, the U.S., and the former Soviet Union (FSU), says the immigrants demonstrate at least as much enthusiasm for Israel Independence Day—and for the traditional steak—as do his Israeli customers. "They're new here," says Fisafasavich. "But, no matter where they come from, they read the newspapers too, so they know what is going on and how lucky we are to be here."

That is the case for Yehudah Zaragoza, who arrived in Israel last year from Iran with his wife and two small sons. This year is the first time Zaragoza has the chance to celebrate the existence of his new home country. Living in the immigrant absorption center in Ra'anana, he plans to toast the Jewish state with the other newly minted Israelis from Spain, Brazil, India, France, the U.S., and the FSU.

Mati (Matthew) Katz, from New York, happened to be visiting a daughter in Israel last Yom Ha'atzmaut before he made aliyah this winter. "The irony is, I made aliyah this year but this is my second Yom Ha'atzmaut," says Katz, who is now living in Maaleh Adumim and waiting for his wife to sell the family home and join him there.

"It was wonderful last year with my wife and all three of our daughters here, but I know it will be something very different this year now that I am a citizen," Katz says. "I had visited here many times, but there was something very powerful about having a one-way ticket to Israel. This year for the first time, I am celebrating as an Israel citizen."

Israelis are determined to celebrate their hard-earned freedom—even in the country's south, where alarms go off with frightening frequency. This is Massachusetts native Bracha Vaknin's fifth year in Israel, and she says she's still enjoying the "miracle of being surrounded by other Jews." But living in Netivot, a 10-minute ride from Sderot, she and her family have gotten used to the alarm going off on her iPhone, signaling a siren anywhere in southern Israel. Vaknin and her husband and children spent nearly two weeks in a shelter two years ago, and this March she was waiting for her daughter's ballet class to end when they were all sent to shelters in Netivot's community center. "We're hoping for a quieter year," she says.

The level of alert doesn't detract from the celebration of Israel on Yom Ha'atzmaut, says Vaknin, who is looking forward to her father's kin's annual "ritual family barbecue," where she will enjoy the holiday with uncles and aunts and cousins.

Yet not everyone is happy with at least one aspect of Yom Ha'atzmaut. Over at the Village Green Restaurant—located near Ben Yehuda Street and the countless Yom Ha'atzmaut bands, performances, and parties that will color the Fifth of Iyar in that area—the fact that Barry Sibul's establishment is vegetarian takes the edge off business on Independence Day, he says.

"There is an amazing quantity of meat consumed on that day in Israel," he says with a sigh. But not to be outdone, Sibul is making sure to stock up on plenty of veggie burgers.

"That way," he says, "even vegetarians can have something that at least looks a bit like meat." ■

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Bedouin seek to integrate, from page 20

able to graduate in 2004 thanks to the outreach program offered by BGU. But her journey was not without challenges.

During her studies, Okby moved back and forth between her home and the university. "It was the most difficult thing," she said. "From 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. I was in the Western world and from 4 p.m. until the next day, the traditional world. It creates a lot of conflict."

Okby recalled feeling immense pressure to succeed, believing that if she failed during her first years of study then perhaps no other

CREDIT: DANI MACHLIS.

Dr. Rania Okby

Bedouin woman would have the courage to accomplish what she ultimately did.

She chose to go into maternal fetal medicine because she fell in love with the "beautiful cycle of pregnancy to birth" during her first year as a medical student. At BGU, even first-year students get a white lab coat. In this role, however, she has found other benefits, including the ability to influence her society. Okby told JNS.org that she serves as a psychologist, sociologist, counselor, and social worker, and that her Bedouin patients feel comfortable opening up about their marital issues and other concerns because they trust her.

"I have a very important role. When I talk with [my patients], I bring examples from our tradition, and then they listen to me more. For example, if a Jewish doctor says, 'You shouldn't have any more children,' they think she says this because of the demographic threat. When I say it, they think, 'she really cares about my life and my health,'" said Okby.

Okby noted that the birth rate in the Bedouin community averages six children per woman, and many raise their children too close together to be healthy.

Rafi Rone, Director of Jewish & Israel Initiatives at the Joseph and Harvey Meyerhoff Family Charitable Funds, said there is a strong correlation between having positive role models and success among women. He pointed to a recent study by the National Institute for Women in Trades, Technology and Science, which found that female students who had four to six female professors were more likely to report having an educational or career role model (55.8 percent) compared to those who had only one to three female professors (50.7 percent) or no female professors (46.0 percent). The fields these professors taught in affected the students' career choices.

"I hear a lot of women saying, 'I want my girls to become like you.' They are proud and happy to have me as their doctor," said Okby, who believes she is representative of a new generation of Bedouin women.

"There is new generation that really wants to move forward," said Rone, noting that the Meyerhoff fund has made Israeli-Arab access one of its many overseas priorities.

Since change won't happen overnight, and it needs to come not solely from the outside but also from within, programs like Silver's and role models like Okby are particularly important, said Rone.

"When you talk about Israel today, you need to talk about Israel as a country and of all of its citizens," he said. "The stronger Israel is economically and educationally, the better off it will be in the long run. That means creating centers of excellence in education, workforce development and access."

Jamal Alkirnawi—founder and chairman of the non-profit A New Dawn, whose stated mission is "to promote equality, coexistence and peace among all residents of the Negev"—seconded Rone's sentiments. He said that as Israel turns 66, it is time to invest in and focus on Bedouin society and education.

"I feel very connected to Israel. I feel responsible for making it a better place," Alkirnawi said. "We need to invest in stronger connections between Jewish Israelis and Bedouin people, to bring these peoples together. We live in this area, in Israel, together. And we should make it better together." ■

Maayan Jaffe is a freelance writer in Overland Park, Kansas. Reach her at maayanjaffe@icloud.com.

Kansas hate crime, from page 15

company in the intellectual mainstream. Blumenthal has, for example, recently addressed the New America Foundation, a leading liberal think-tank in Washington, DC, which was apparently unperturbed by his flock of Nazi admirers, or by the fact that he was the subject of a flattering profile on Press TV, the official mouthpiece of the Iranian regime.

How much longer will we buy into the ludicrous idea that Blumenthal carries no responsibility for the way his screeds are interpreted? Similarly, when we read leading political scientist Stephen Walt, co-author of the miserable book "The Israel Lobby," telling Haaretz that 9/11 was Israel's fault, why do we continue to view his discourse as more sophisticated then the bigots who parrot him?

People like Frazier Cross don't emerge from a vacuum. They are enabled by the same deadly ideas about Jews and Israel that have become so fashionable in parts of the media and academia. In the wake of the hate crime in Kansas, it's time to start highlighting those links. ■

Ben Cohen is the Shillman Analyst for JNS.org. His writings on Jewish affairs and Middle Eastern politics have been published in Commentary, the New York Post, Haaretz, Jewish Ideas Daily *and many other publications.*

For 66th birthday, Israel fetes the year of the woman

By Deborah Fineblum/JNS.org

How is the Jewish state's 66th birthday celebration different from all other years' celebrations? Special plans are afoot to recognize the achievements of Israeli women.

On May 5, the theme of the ceremony kicking off the back-to-back Israeli Memorial Day and Independence Day events on Mount Herzl is "The Era of Women—Achievements and Challenges." Independence Day torches, featured annually at the official state ceremony, will be lit exclusively by women at this year's event.

Israeli Culture and Sport Minister Limor Livnat introduced the government's yearlong focus on the achievements and challenges of today's Israeli woman, in recognition of those women who have made significant contributions to both the State and to Israeli society as a whole in the arenas of science, culture, economy, defense, women's rights, education, business, hi-tech, the environment, and social activism.

"The time has come that the state and society will put women at the center and give them the national stage," Livnat said in a statement.

Though all Israeli women are included in the government's Independence Day salute, 14 notable women have been singled out for special recognition as ceremonial torchbearers:

- Maj. Gen. Orna Barbivai, who, as head of the Israel Defense Forces Manpower Directorate, is the Israeli army's highest-ranking woman.
- Adina Bar-Shalom, who was recently tapped for the Israel Prize for her "pioneering work to bridge societal rifts and socioeconomic gaps and to promote an ultra-Orthodox lifestyle that includes social openness and higher education."
- Actress Miriam Zohar, who also received the Israel Prize, in 1986.
- Kira Radinsky, for her pioneering work in the field of web dynamics at the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology.
- Belaynesh Zevadia, the Israeli ambassador to Ethiopia.
- Carmela Menashe, military affairs reporter for Army Radio.
- Hindia Suleiman, who founded an initiative to empower the women of Bu'eina-Nujeidat, an Israeli Arab village.
- Tali Peretz-Cohen, whose rape crisis center comes to the aid of victims of sexual assault in the Galilee and the Golan.
- Maxine Fassberg, CEO of Intel Israel and a leader of Israel's burgeoning hi-tech industry.
- Miriam Peretz, whose two sons were Israeli army officers killed in the line of duty in the Gaza Strip and in Lebanon.
- Shahar Pe'er, a teenaged Israeli tennis star currently ranked 11th in the world, who is lighting a torch with Paralympics handcyclist Pascale Noa Bercovitch.
- Geula Cohen, a former member of the Knesset, who will light a torch together with Gal Yoseph, chairwoman of Israel's National Students Council.

The 14 torchbearers were selected by the members of a special committee charged to select women of great accomplishment from across Israel's diverse population, what Livnat referred to as representing "a unique mosaic of Israeli society." And that they did. But other Israeli women interviewed by JNS.org have their own ideas of who should have made the list. Among them:

CREDIT: DANI MACHLIS.

Israel's Memorial Day/ Independence Day celebration, 2007

- Karnit Flug, current governor of the Bank of Israel, the country's central bank, was "nominated" by Chana Port of Beit Shemesh.
- Jerusalem Post columnist Caroline Glick, whose outspoken political analysis shakes Israelis out of their complacency, said Raanana's Etta Korenman.
- Supermodel Bar Refaeli, who, said Sofie Rousseau of Kfar Saba, is a stalwart defender of Israel wherever her international career takes her.
- Rabbanit Chana Henkin, educator and innovator of the Yoetzet Halacha program, which trains and empowers women to give advice on matters of family and women's health, suggested Tzilia Sacharow of Jerusalem.
- Bestselling Iranian-born Israeli pop singer Rita, who is "talented, charismatic, and creative," according to Shelly Margalit, who lives on a kibbutz near Petach Tikva.

Yet Gabie Sykora of Ra'anana believes that every wife and mother of every soldier should be nominated. She currently has a son and a daughter in the Israel Defense Forces.

"Behind nearly every holy chayal/chayelet (male and female soldier)," she told JNS.org, "there's a mom or wife doing their horrendously smelling laundry, getting food ready to stuff them with or send back with them, and trying her darndest not to worry and to keep smiling." ■

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'Tears of Color' art exhibit displays struggles of Israeli patients with eating disorders

By Maayan Jaffe/JNS.org

This is how I want to be—without fear. Independent. I want to be like a bird. I want to spread my wings."

So reads part of the description beneath one of the 30 paintings on display until the end of May at the ZOA House in Tel Aviv. The collection represents the first-ever art exhibit of its kind: an exhibit created entirely by Israelis in treatment for eating disorders.

Dubbed "Tears of Color," based on one of the collection's paintings, the exhibit provides a window into the minds of individuals struggling with eating disorders. Each image is accompanied by an explanation of the patient's treatments and trials during their time at Reuth Medical Center's Machon Agam center for eating disorders. Agam, located in the Tel Aviv area, is the largest and busiest outpatient eating disorder clinic in Israel.

CREDIT: PROVIDED PHOTO

"Tears of Color" exhibit at the ZOA House in Tel Aviv

"Eating disorder patients are often among the most articulate people," explained Yehudit Arad, exhibit curator and a renowned Israeli art therapist. "But when it comes to talking about their eating disorders, they cannot express themselves, or they have learned what they are supposed to say."

Art, Arad said, helps these patients to open up. Through Arad's guidance and a series of exercises, the patients are able to tap into the gap between what they show on the outside and what they feel on the inside. When used in conjunction with other therapies such as counseling, medication, and nutritional support, art therapy can serve a vital role in eating-disorder patients' recovery, according to Arad.

"They learn to see themselves through the colors, lines and drawings," she said. "These tell a story. It helps the words come out. Often they have no voice. On the canvas they find their voice."

The imagery is bold and colorful; each color, said Arad, has a personal meaning. On each wall is a different patient's story. On the wall including "Tears of Color" are 10 paintings, among them several images of birds. The first one shows an orange bird in its cage without eyes or wings.

"She is choosing to stay in her cage," explained the artist, who like the others in the exhibit asked to remain anonymous.

Later, the bird stands atop a hill, surrounded by yellow light, testing the possibility of freedom. In the final painting, the bird becomes a female body, with arms spread, ready to make the plunge into independence and a life without her disease.

Yehuda Ninyo, head of Machon Agam, said the exhibit is on target to be viewed by 10,000 people. Agam has seen a 20-percent annual increase in patients for the last several years, he noted. Ninyo attributed this to a combination of medical and public awareness, and not necessarily to a spike in eating disorders in the Jewish state. Still, he said, the disease is starting younger and parents should be trained to know the signs.

"Parents can begin to see symptoms at around age 4 or 5," Ninyo said. "Maybe they are not eating, they are saying, 'I'm fat.' … It is getting worse each year," he said.

The Jerusalem Post reported last year that 1,500 Israeli teenagers develop an eating disorder and five percent of those suffering from anorexia die each year.

In January 2013, the Israeli Knesset passed a law that banned models deemed too skinny—those with a body mass index level below 18.5—from the catwalks, as well as from photo shoots and advertising campaigns. This was the first (and to-date only) time a country has set down legislation for a wholesale ban on what are viewed by some as unhealthy skinny models.

Currently, the Knesset is reviewing new legislation that would allow a husband or other family member to obtain medical custody over a woman with an eating disorder if her weight dropped to a dangerously low level and she was refusing treatment.

It's a positive step, said model Yomi Abiola, founder of Stand up for Fashion, a global campaign promoting diversity, equality, and inclusion that aims to "transform lives through the power of fashion." But she told JNS.org in an email that she thinks Israel is treating "the effect and not the cause. … I think efforts and resources should be poured into education."

Judy Krasna knows firsthand the frustration of treating an eating disorder in Israel. Her daughter suffered from the disease for several years, and Krasna said it was challenging to learn about and to get proper care. She told JNS.org that her daughter's pediatrician didn't have a lot of resources, and that she was blamed for her daughter's disease and shunned from involvement in her treatment. At public clinics, her daughter saw one psychologist and she saw another; the two did not share information. She was not even welcomed into her daughter's nutritionist appointments.

Additionally, she noted, while there are several Israeli hospitals that will work with eating disorder patients, few have units exclusively to deal with this disorder. And there are always waiting lists. Private clinics like Agam are "wonderful," Krasna said. "Private clinics are better, more intensive, multi-disciplinary," she said, "but only the privileged get private."

Today, Krasna serves as a coach for other Israeli parents of children with eating disorders and is an activist for increased public funding for the cause. Arad, too, said the one thing Americans could do to assist Israel in this arena is offer financial support to enable clinics like Agam to provide grants to the patients who cannot afford Agam's services, but desperately need the assistance.

Temimah Zucker, 23, is a recovered anorexic from New Jersey. She speaks publicly about the need for culturally sensitive and targeted support for people with eating disorders, especially within the Jewish community.

"This is a very serious issue," said Zucker. "It's an illness and it needs to be thought of as an illness." ■

Maayan Jaffe is a freelance writer in Overland Park, Kansas. Reach her at maayanjaffe@icloud.com or on Twitter at @MaayanJaffe.

Jewish author of *Eat to Live* dishes on health care, nutrition, disease prevention

By Robert Gluck/JNS.org

While the national debate on "Obamacare" rages on past the recent March 31 sign-up deadline, bestselling Jewish author Dr. Joel Fuhrman says the "current disease care model of what we call 'health care' cannot possibly be sustained."

"There is simply not enough money available to support a system in which the lion's share of expenditures is devoted to acute care, with virtually nothing being spent on preventive medicine, i.e. health care," Fuhrman says in an interview. "To make matters worse, the dollars spent in acute care vastly favors procedural rather than cognitive medicine."

Fuhrman is best known for his popular 2011 book *Eat to Live*, which uses scientific evidence to make a case for how Americans should change their diets and that what they eat is, in fact, killing them.

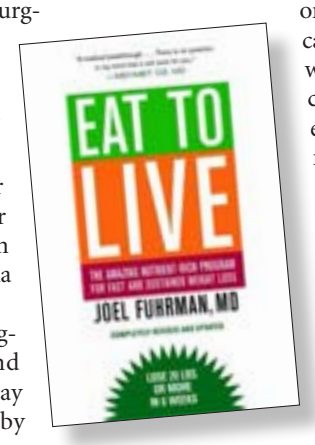
"Out of one pocket we pay billions of our tax dollars to support the production of expensive, disease-causing foods," Fuhrman writes. "Out of the other pocket, we pay medical bills that are too high because our overweight population consumes too much of these rich, disease-causing foods. Our tax dollars are actually used to make our society sicker and keep our health insurance costs high."

Fuhrman—a member of Jewish Vegetarians of North America (JVNA), author of six books, frequent PBS show host, and former world-class figure skater—tells JNS.org that he does not consciously apply Jewish values or any religious preference to his scientific decision making regarding preventing and treating disease with superior nutrition.

He was, however, featured in the film *A Sacred Duty: Applying Jewish Values to Help Heal the World*, a 60-minute JVNA documentary from 2007 that was written and produced by Lionel Friedberg. The film focuses on Jewish teachings about caring for the earth, treatment of animals, and the environment, with a focus on vegetarianism.

Americans, Fuhrman says, have a diet of mostly animal products and processed foods.

"Five percent of calories from fruits and vegetables isn't sufficient," he says. "The diet, to be healthy, has to be mostly fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts and seeds. We have these weapons of mass destruction on every street corner and they're called donuts, cheeseburgers, French fries, potato chips, junk food. Our kids are living on a junk food diet."



According to Fuhrman, if people don't change their diets, they can expect a shorter life, and if they do live into their golden years, they will have an increased likelihood of dementia and physical ailments.

Celebrities like singer-songwriter Alanis Morissette and primatologist Jane Goodall say they have been influenced by *Fuhrman's work*.

In Goodall's book, *Harvest for Hope: A Guide to Mindful Eating*, the famous chimp researcher notes, "In his excellent book on family nutrition and healthy appetizing recipes, 'Disease-Proof Your Child,' [Fuhrman] points out that we have been conditioned to believe that animal products are the best source of protein. In fact, peas, green vegetables, and beans have more protein per calorie than meat."

Morissette, in a 2009 interview with *People* magazine, calls reading *Eat to Live* a "redefining moment" in her life. The singer had battled eating disorders her whole life and was mocked for being fat. After following Fuhrman's lifestyle change and diet plan, she lost weight and exercised more, running 20 miles a week.

Fuhrman laments growing rates of obesity and diseases resulting from unhealthy diets in America, saying, "we're destroying the land, we're destroying people's health, people are getting more sick, which is requiring more medical attention and care."

"Our population can't walk and can't perform; it's ruining their intellectual abilities on the job," he tells JNS.org. "We cannot compete worldwide and we are paying so much for medical care costs. If we're going to expect to compete in the world marketplace, and even to survive as a nation or as a species for hundreds of years, we have got to take better care of the Earth and our health."

According to Mark Epstein, president of the National Health Association, Fuhrman presents a nutritional roadmap to optimum health.

"His information is painstakingly researched and supported, yet he presents the results with an easy-to-follow style," Epstein says. "He states the facts and educates us to make the food choices that will help us overcome disease and regain health. His book *Eat to Live* marks the beginning of a genuine, scientifically-based health revolution."

Eat to Live is not just about counting calories and eating less, but also about protecting the body against disease, says the author.

"I go through the biology and the physiology showing how higher nutrient consumption suppresses appetite and reduces food addictions and food cravings," Fuhrman says. "The diet I recommend is much more promotion of long life, heart attack protection, reduction of cancer risk, and prevention of dementia and strokes. It's much more aggressive as far as disease protection."

Fuhrman coined the word "nutritarian" for those who adopt a diet based on his simple formula: Health = Nutrients/Calories. Simply, your health is predicted by your nutrient intake divided by your intake of calories, in Fuhrman's estimation.

"Your key to permanent weight loss is to eat predominantly those foods that have a high proportion of nutrients to calories. Every food can be evaluated using this formula," he says.

Healthy food can also taste great, notes Fuhrman.

"You like what you get used to eating," he says. "When you start eating healthy, you start liking it. It's all about changing your habits and giving your taste buds a chance to adapt."

Exercise is another key element to Fuhrman's proposed "nutritarian" lifestyle. A former member of the U.S. World Figure Skating Team, Fuhrman placed second in the U.S. National Pairs Championship in 1973. He came in 3rd place at the 1976 World Professional Pairs Skating Championship in Jaca, Spain, with partner Gale Fuhrman. At nearly 60, he still enjoys physical activities, such as tennis and skiing.

"If we eat these foods that are dramatically protective, we can be protected," Furhman says. "When you are protected, you feel well, you have energy, you maintain your youthful vigor, and you can live life and do what you want to do. You can exercise, you can climb mountains." ■

Overprotective or loving? Daughters reflect on Jewish mothers in new anthology

By Debra Rubin/JNS.org

Rachel Ament noticed that she and her friends often shared humorous anecdotes that were typically variations on a theme: overprotective, worrying Jewish moms who smothered them with love.

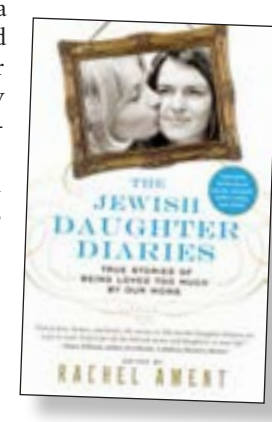
That included Ament's own mother. "My mom is probably every Jewish stereotype scrunched into one," the Washington, DC, resident tells JNS.org. "At the root of all these stereotypical, worrying, overprotective moms, is love."

A social media writer for Capital One, as well as a freelance writer, Ament decided about three years ago that it would be fun to invite Jewish women writers she admires—mostly bloggers, standup comics, and actors—to contribute stories about their mothers for an anthology.

The result—*The Jewish Daughter Diaries: True Stories of Being Loved Too Much by Our Moms*—features 27 essays and is set for a May 6 release by Sourcebook, in time for Mother's Day (May 11). The youngest contributor is writer and BuzzFeed senior editor Lauren Yapalater, 24; the oldest is stand-up comedian Wendy Liebman, 53.

In putting the collection together, Ament contacted about 40 writers. Mayim Bialik, actor from *The Big Bang Theory* and blogger for Kveller; Jena Friedman, a producer with *The Daily Show*; and Deb Margolin, a playwright and actor, said "yes." Foul-mouthed comedian Sarah Silverman and essayist Sloane Cosley said "no"—they're too busy, their publicists told Ament.

More than one writer mentions her "Jewish nose," including Bialik. "If Barbra Streisand could be so famous and amazing and wonderful with her nose, why should mine be any problem?" the former child actress from *Blossom* writes.



Many of the essays focus on dating and a Jewish mother's strong desire to see her daughter married. That includes Ament's chapter, "Seth Cohen Is the One for You," in which she states her certainty that all Jewish women carry a "particular chromosome for matchmaking—a trait that surfaces with a particular strength of spirit in my mom."

Ament was in second grade, she writes, when her mother "would point out different snot-drenched boys in the carpool lane at my school insisting that they were meant for me." No matter that at the time, Ament believed boys had cooties and by the time she liked boys, they were "rarely of the Semitic kind." That didn't stop her mom from declaring that the fictional Seth Cohen from the TV series "The O.C." would be her match. "I swear, if that guy wasn't designed by God Himself to be your soul mate, then I don't know who was," Ament writes.

Yet after meeting a Jewish guy at a "Matzo Ball" dance who was ready on a first date to bring her home to meet his mother, Ament texted her own mother to say she was ready to meet Seth. "I figured that even fictional characters from Fox TV programs would be more promising than the eligible young men you meet at the Matzo Ball," she writes.

Among Ament's favorite essays is one by Lauren Greenberg, who wrote for Whitney Cummings's *Love You, Mean It* E! TV show. When Greenberg turned 30, her mother created a JDate profile for her. "Why would I want to date some guy who hung around to talk to a girl's mother?" Greenberg writes. "Like, I'd be all, 'Glad you and my mom hit it off. Let's make out!' Ew. No. Ew."

She didn't follow up with any of the men her mother had prescreened, although she concedes that it is "something I now regret. My mother put a lot of effort into screening potential sons-in-law and all I did was roll my eyes at her."

Greenberg, however, figures she might have a second chance. "Maybe this year, she'll send a video to ABC, explaining why I would be the next Bachelorette," she writes.

Ament doesn't worry about perpetuating stereotypes with her book. "I don't think as a culture we should ever be scared to talk about ourselves, to talk about our identity, but I do think we should be careful about how we talk about it, and talk about it in a very full, multidimensional way," she tells JNS.org. While Jewish mothers in the past were often ridiculed and demonized, Ament says the writers in her book portray their moms "in a very loving, heartfelt, affectionate way."

Not all the essays focus on mothers. Sometimes it's a grandmother, such as blogger Almie Rose's 5-foot-1, feisty Oma, a Holocaust survivor and "slip of a thing" who was "bawdy, blunt" and sarcastic.

"But on the opposite side of that fire and sarcasm was a fierce love for her children and grandchildren," Rose writes. "Oma's love was immense and unconditional."

Then there's Kerry Cohen, a child of bitter divorce, who looks to her grandmother as a model for relationships. "My grandmother could teach me things when it came to men," Cohen, whose books include *Loose Girl: A Memoir of Promiscuity*, writes. "It wasn't just because she'd been married for fifty-seven years to a man who adored her until the end. It's that her standards were so much higher than mine." ■

Ari Shavit: *My Promised Land*

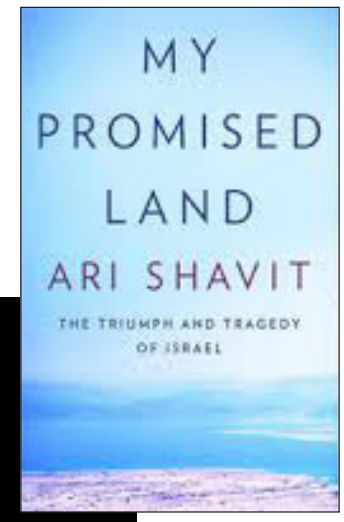
Rachel Urist, staff writer

Ari Shavit has written this landmark work with passion, courage, and vision. It is intensely personal. It is also a stunning overview of the rise of the modern state of Israel within the context of 20th century Jewish history. *My Promised Land* is like a letter, sent through time and space, to Jewish brethren round the world. It beseeches us all to open our eyes to the grim realities that beset our beloved state of Israel. The book reflects the author's sense of mission and purpose, and it testifies to the moral and existential conundrum that besets concerned Israelis and Zionists the world over.

Ari Shavit

Ari Shavit wrote *My Promised Land* after interviewing countless Israelis, both Jewish and Arab. They were government officials, policy-makers, writers, scientists, military and intelligence officers, entrepeneurs. The result is a controversial book that both sparks and transcends debate. Written with conviction, and erudition, the book describes and often takes issue with Israeli policies, Israeli social and political movements, and with individual voices in the conversation regarding Israel's future. It offers firm, historical contextualization. It dares to ask whether Israel can and will continue to exist, given the many forces against it—from within and without. The author emphatically and enthusiastically affirms his love for his homeland. He is grateful to the faithful who gave their lives to ensure the state's continued viability, but he wonders how deeply that Zionist faith now resides in the generation that must bear arms to protect the nation. After covering Israel's political and social history, he asks: where are we going?

Shavit begins his book with the story of his great-grandfather, the Rt. Honorable Herbert Bentwich, born in 1856 and raised in London by parents who had fled Russia. Sent to the best schools, he became a lawyer. He was among the gifted and highly regarded solicitors of his day.



He was blue-eyed, commanding, and loyal to the crown. Unlike many of his enlightened Jewish peers, he remained an orthodox Jew. He and his wife had eleven children.

Shavit writes:

> *Had I met Herbert Bentwich, I probably wouldn't have liked him. If I were his son, I am sure I would have rebelled against him. His world—royalist, religious, patriarchal, and imperial—is eras away from my world. But as I study him from a distance—more than a century of distance—I cannot deny the similarities between us. I am surprised to find how much I identify with my eccentric great-grandfather.*

Leading a group of 21 pilgrims, Shavit's great-grandfather sailed to Palestine in 1897. Theodore Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, put great stock in their journey. Like Moses sending Joshua to the land of Canaan (my analogy), Herzl expected a positive report from Bentwich, one that would describe the land and its inhabitants, and one that would confirm the land's "prospects for colonizing," as Shavit puts it. Herzl wanted the report presented at the first Zionist Congress, to be held in Basel. But Bentwich's interest in Palestine was "romantic," not political. Bentwich journeyed to find God, not a future Jewish state. His report to Herzl was positive. Upon returning from his initial journey, he invited Herzl to his patrician London dining club, where Herzl's charisma captivated all who heard him. Ultimately, Bentwich and his family relocated to Palestine.

When Shavit writes of Israel's 1948 war of independence, he is astonished at the nascent state's miraculous triumph. "Against all odds," he writes, Israel's brave 80,000 Jews defeated the armies of 600,000 Arabs. That the tiny but determined entity, newly called Israel, could win against such enmity, is staggering. But, he goes on, the odds are shifting. The Arab majority of the Middle East is growing. The menace to Israel is being harnessed with patience and resolution. Israel's Dimona facility—its nuclear capability—has served as a deterrent to large-scale war, but with the Iranian nuclear capacity at hand, the future is, at best, uncertain. Yes, one finds glimmers of peace, here and there, and voices of reconciliation. But those glimmers and voices are quickly dimmed.

Shavit lauds Israel's early pioneers. They transformed the image of Jew from victim to brawny, self-assured man of the hour. The new Jew was self-reliant, ready to take action. The change was astonishing. The technological advances that transformed the land into a picture postcard of the green thumb were (and are) staggering. The Jewish Israeli was a figure of moral, physical, intellectual, and psychological strength.

But Shavit never forgets the Arab side of the story, too. What to Jews was triumph, the Arabs dubbed "nakba," or catastrophe. The expulsions and massacres of Arab villagers—in Lydda and Deir Yassin, for example—must not be ignored. He pays heed to the legitimate grievances of Arabs living in Israel. While most live far better in Israel than they would in neighboring Arab countries, they are, compared with most Israelis, second class citizens. Resentment grows.

Shavit writes much of the book in present tense, giving a sense of immediacy, even urgency, to the narrative. The book is often punctuated with personal memories, but it is not a memoir. Nor does Mr. Shavit allow his personal biases to dictate the realities he presents. This book is the how and why of the Zionist cause; an enterprise that bound Jews together for millennia. In the face of Nazi Germany, the Zionist cause became an imperative. "In 1935, Zionist justice is an absolute universal justice that cannot be refuted," writes Shavit. The establishment of a state of refuge was essential to the existence, vitality, and future of the Jewish people. For centuries, the Jewish people had invoked Zion in their daily prayers. In the 20th Century, whether or not a Jew began the day with prayers, whether or not he believed in God, safe haven was essential to life.

In his endnotes, Shavit writes: *My Promised Land* is not an academic work of history. Rather, it is a personal journey through contemporary and historic Israel, recounting the larger Israel saga by telling several dozen specific Israeli stories that are significant and poignant."

According to the *New York Times*, *My Promised Land* was written in English with an American readership in mind. It is an important book. Plaudits abound. Among them:

"*This is the epic history that Israel deserves—beautifully written, dramatically rendered, full of moral complexity.*" *–Franklin Foer, editor,* The New Republic.

"A beautiful, mesmerizing, morally serious, and vexing book." –Jeffrey Goldberg

"… one of the most important books about Israel and Zionism that I have ever read."–Daniel Gordis

Be warned. However riveting, this book can be as depressing as it is thought-provoking. ■

Renee Robbins—pianist, performer, teacher

San Slomovits, staff writer

Renee Robbins is a long-time Ann Arbor Suzuki piano teacher and teacher trainer and a performing pianist. I first heard of her when, after the 2010 Haitian earthquake, she helped organize a fundraiser for a Haitian school that had been destroyed by the quake.

Robbins: My husband John and I moved to Ann Arbor in 1969.

WJN: Did you come here to study at the University?

Robbins: John has a degree in nuclear physics from the University of Rochester. I went to the Eastman School of Music; we met there. I graduated in '65 and then I worked for VISTA on a Navajo reservation in Utah.

WJN: You taught music there?

Robbins: No, I set up a Head Start program, I set up a library in the boarding school, taught health education, some English, just everything. In the VISTA program they said, "Well, you'll work yourself out of a job in a year." And here I was, this naïve 22-year-old, with these wise Navajos who've been just dumped on, and I'm supposed to do what I'm supposed to do in a year? Are you kidding? I didn't know any Navajo, people didn't speak English….

WJN: Were you married by then?

Robbins: No, we used the payphone at the trading post a lot. (Laughter) When I got back we got married and then I worked at the YWCA in Rochester for a couple of years with teen mothers. They figured I was the only married person in the group, and so I ought to work with the mothers. These were like 12-year-old girls, you know… but it was fun. Then after John finished his PhD, we went on a six-month camping trip, we drove all around the West and picked up mail that my brother forwarded every two weeks. We got to UC Berkeley [University of California] and John sent out letters saying he was interested in nuclear methods for peaceful purposes, and he got one job offer from The Phoenix Lab (which no longer exists – it was on North Campus) where they were doing environmental work. He was hired sight unseen, from payphones in National Parks. (Laughter) My brother was living here, and I wanted to go to Social Work school here. I was going to leave music behind. We figured we'd be here while I was in school and then we'd leave. We never left.

WJN: You started piano at a young age.

Robbins: Yes.

WJN: And you studied at the Eastman School of Music?

Robbins: I was actually on the River Campus, (of the University of Rochester) in the liberal arts school there. My father insisted that I have at least one year of liberal arts.

WJN: Was your family musical?

Robbins: My mother started my brother on violin. She was an amateur violinist, and she started me on piano. Of course I was forced to practice. My father was the listener in the family. But somehow I kept at it, even though I hated to practice. I always hated to practice. I was awful.

Renee Robbins

WJN: We won't print that, so your students don't see it. (Laughter) Or maybe we should print it so they'll know it's OK to hate practicing, as long as you do it anyway! (More laughter)

Robbins: I've told them all this stuff. I've told them. (Still more laughter) I do like it now. Because it's meditative, and it calms me down… but not then.

WJN: You started teaching piano here 40 years ago?

Robbins: Actually, my first piano student was a Native American girl on the reservation. Her father was Navajo; her mother was Chippewa, Ottawa and Laguna Pueblo, and her father worked in the oil camps. They had a piano, the father was a self-taught trumpet player, a real hogan Navajo who ran away from home to go to school, an amazing person. They asked me if I would give her piano lessons. She was my first piano student.

And then I came here and I did some piano teaching and I didn't like it. It just felt like… why am I doing this? It's not satisfying. The kids don't practice.... And about that time there was a piano teacher, who at the time seemed very old to me, and she talked about Suzuki piano. She taught a workshop, and a light bulb went off. I guess what appealed to me was—every teacher ought to feel this way—you're really teaching children to grow. Music is the medium.

I know a lot about my students, because the parents have to come to all the lessons, so I really am pretty connected with the whole family, and I hear from people all the time that I am the second mom in the family. I have some kids who've been extremely successful. I have a girl who's on Broadway right now. Just made it a month ago.

WJN: Wonderful. Working in a pit band?

Robbins: No, she's on stage. She graduated this last May and she's made it. It's a small role, but it's in Mama Mia.

WJN: Broadway is Broadway!

Robbins: Broadway is Broadway! (Laughter) Her mother says she can pay her own bills now.

WJN: Not even every lawyer can say that, fresh out of school! (Laughter)

Robbins: I've had some who've been that successful and I have had a lot of kids who have been very slow and I just kind of prod them and nurse them along.

WJN: Did you ever pursue social work?

Robbins: For a long time, in my head, I would say, "Well, I'm not a really good social worker because really I'm a pianist." And then I'd say, "Well, I'm not really that good a pianist, because really I'm a social worker." I was sitting right on that fence, and I finally decided I had to stop that. I had to go one way or the other and it was very hard.

WJN: Although it sounds like you're now doing a little bit of social work when you're teaching.

Robbins: A lot. It's usually about 90 percent social work. When I'm lucky it's 90 percent music. That's probably what makes it satisfying to me, that I really know these kids. I know what they're capable of, what they're not capable of... I feel like my job is to prod them as much as I can, but not to get rid of them, which a lot of teachers do, but to make them go deeper into what they do.

WJN: Meaning that you'll work with a child who is perhaps not very talented, or willing or able to work very hard...

Robbins: There's a term that music teachers use, which is "spring cleaning"

WJN: And you don't do that.

Robbins: No. Rarely. I've had some kids who have just plodded along for a long time and suddenly they feel committed to it. And that's great to watch. It's wonderful. I don't know how you measure soul development, or soul growth. I feel really passionate about getting music into kids' lives.

WJN: Let's talk about your work with the Haitian violinist, Romel Joseph.

Robbins: After the earthquake in Haiti in 2010 I felt very moved by what I was hearing, upset about it, and there was a piece on NPR about this guy, Romel Joseph, who'd just been rescued and they talked about how he was blind from infancy, and had a masters from Juilliard in violin. He lost his wife in that earthquake; it was just miraculous that he was saved. And I decided we're going to do fundraising for his music school.

WJN: The school had been destroyed in the earthquake.

Robbins: Yes. And ten years, to the day, before the earthquake, the school had been destroyed by fire. Well, these people do not give up. I organized a playathon at Kerrytown, for music students of any teacher in the area, and we did it for about twelve hours straight. We raised almost $10,000. Cecilia Johnson, a violinist from Toledo that I met through a mutual friend here, went to the Cincinnati Conservatory with Romel and they've been good friends ever since. She helped organize the playathon.

WJN: And you've continued to work with Romel.

Robbins: Yes, he came a couple of years ago and again in March of this year. His children came with him. His daughter, Victoria, a violinist who was a Sphinx finalist, and his son Bradley, a pianist, also came with him. I play music a lot. I don't much like to do solo stuff, but I love chamber music and I play with a lot of people, and so we played together. The concerts in March went very well. A Detroit area Haitian-American group came in full force and made a quite sizable donation to Romel's school, and a number of attendees from Ann Arbor made very generous donations. But, above all, it was a large, warm, happy audience. ■

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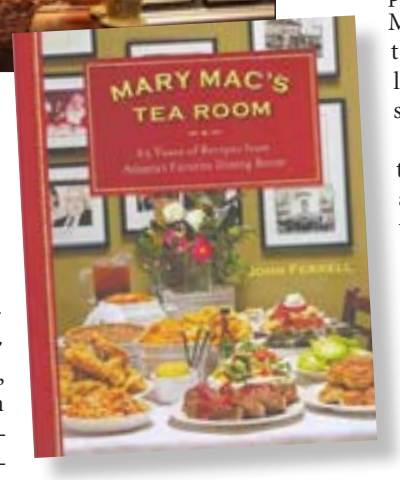
Try Southern desserts for Shavuot

Mary Bilyeu, food editor

Southerners and Jews share a great tradition: that of feeding people, of feeding them well, and of feeding them generously. No self-respecting member of either group would ever fail to nudge family, friends, and guests toward second or even third helpings of food. Tables, especially for holidays, are laden with pickles and main dishes and sides and salads and breads and desserts. Whether being *haymish* or offering Southern hospitality, the notion—along with the resulting full stomach and need for a nap—is the same.



So for Shavuot, it seemed fitting to talk about the new cookbook *Mary Mac's Tea Room: 65 Years of Recipes from Atlanta's Favorite Dining Room*. I have an older book, *Southern Cooking from Mary Mac's Tea Room*, by Margaret Lupo, who'd bought the restaurant from founder Mary McKinsey shortly after starting to work there. This latest one is from John Ferrell, who's owned the business since 1994. Margaret's daughter, Marie Lupo Nygren, writes in the foreward that calling it a tearoom "was a misnomer, as it wasn't a place to have tea, but a nicer version of a 'meat and three'"—a place serving a meat with three vegetable dishes on the side. There are, therefore, recipes for everything from soups to cornbread to roasts to cookies.

Now, I grant that there are many dishes in this book that glorify Southern cooking while simultaneously representing an affront to the laws of *Kashrut*: Fresh Corn and Bacon Chowder, Fried Gulf Shrimp and Oysters, and Country Ham with Redeye Gravy are just a few that set off the *treyf* alarm. But there are so many, too, that would be wonderful for Rosh Hashanah (Applesauce Cake), for Chanukah (Battered Cornmeal Fries), for Tu B'Shevat (Pecan Pie Muffins), or even for Pesach (Pickled Beets).

Just as traditional delis are fading away—with hipper, chicer establishments seeming to take their place in many large cities—so, too, are tea rooms becoming relics; Mary Mac's is the last of 16 that used to thrive in Atlanta in the 1940s. This cookbook helps to enshrine its recipes, which have barely changed since the restaurant first opened in 1945.

When she owned it, Margaret Lupo was famous for welcoming everyone to Mary Mac's, regardless of socioeconomic status or race. Her daughter Marie writes: ""Mother made it clear from the start that 'everyone's money is the same color, and if you don't understand that, then you don't need to work in my restaurant.'" Mama —as Margaret was affectionately called by staff, customers, and family alike—"treated that dining room as if it were her own personal dining room."

Many employees have worked at Mary Mac's for nearly four decades, and their children have worked there as well. Waitresses greet customers—regulars or newcomers—"with a friendly 'Hey, honey, how are ya?' spoken with the requisite Southern accent," and the cookbook graciously includes photos and quotes from the staff, acknowledging their contributions with gratitude. The restaurant is an institution but, as John Ferrell writes, "You never really own a timeless place like Mary Mac's, you just take care of its legacy and treasures."

He also notes that, "Traditions are important to life in the South," just as they are to Jewish life. Thus, for Shavuot—with its history of eating dairy foods— you'll want some treats ready to enjoy when you return home from *shul* after the *tikkun*. Although it's not a commandment to eat dairy, it's certainly wonderful to celebrate the holiday with rich, sweet foods reminiscent of the Torah having been likened to milk and honey in the Song of Songs.

So this month, I'm offering some recipes for decadent dairy desserts from Mary Mac's, combining Jewish and Southern traditions. Of course, this being classic Southern cuisine, health is not a primary factor in Mary Mac's recipes; enjoyment is. Ritz crackers, mayonnaise, and butter make regular appearances throughout the cookbook. But, all things in moderation! And Shavuot is a celebration, after all. A little indulgence, a little nosh, right?

You could enjoy a luscious frozen peanut butter pie named in honor of President Jimmy Carter, a long-time Mary Mac's devotee. Or, perhaps, a beautiful, moist coffee cake which can be served simply with ice cream or, more elaborately, with whipped cream and fruit. Or how about a distinctive and unique pie made with cottage cheese, akin to a combination of rice pudding and the traditional Shavuot cheesecake?

If you need any further convincing, just heed the advice of Mary Mac's cook Shirley Mitchell: "Have you tasted one of my desserts yet?" she asks in the cookbook. "Honey, you're really not livin' right if you haven't." ■

Carter Custard

"President Jimmy Carter frequented Mary Mac's Tea Room so much that he even had his own dessert named after him. Margaret Lupo introduced the peanut custard when Carter was running for governor."

1-1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
3/4 cup granulated sugar
6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) unsalted butter, melted
6 ounces cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup whole milk
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 cup whipping cream
1/2 cup unsalted dry-roasted peanuts

In a medium bowl, combine the graham cracker crumbs, granulated sugar, and melted butter until the mixture clumps. Pat the crumb mixture into the bottom and up the sides of a 9-inch pie plate.

In the work bowl of a stand mixer with the whisk attachment, on medium speed, beat the cream cheese, milk, peanut butter, and confectioners' sugar. In a clean work bowl of a stand mixer with a clean whisk attachment, on medium-high speed, beat the whipping cream until stiff peaks form. Gently fold the whipped cream into the peanut butter mixture.

Pour the custard into the crust. Cover the top with the peanuts. Freeze for 2 hours. Serve frozen.

Serves 6 to 8.

Cream Cheese Pound Cake

"This is my mother's recipe," writes John Ferrell, "and is wonderful served with fresh, seasonal fruit and topped with whipped cream. But I prefer it sliced and toasted in the morning for breakfast."

1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
3/4 pound (3 sticks) salted butter, softened
3 cups plus 3 tablespoons sugar
6 large eggs
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
1 teaspoon pure lemon or almond extract
2 pints fresh strawberries, hulled and quartered
whipped cream, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Lightly grease a Bundt pan.

In the work bowl of a stand mixer with the whisk attachment, on medium speed, beat the cream cheese and butter for 10 minutes, or until creamy. Gradually add the 3 cups sugar and beat for 5 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating just until the yellow disappears. Gradually add the flour, beating on low speed until blended. Fold in the vanilla and lemon or almond extract.

Pour the batter into the pan and bake for 1-1/2 hours. Let the cake cool in the pan; remove from the pan and let cool completely on a rack.

Place the strawberries in a large bowl. Add the 3 tablespoons sugar and toss until the sugar dissolves, about 2 minutes. Cover and chill for at least 1 hour or overnight. Stir occasionally.

To serve, spoon the berries over slices of the pound cake and garnish with whipped cream.

Serves 10 to 12.

Cottage Cheese Pie

"Shirley Mitchell has baked our yeast rolls, cornbread, peach cobbler, and cinnamon rolls for more than three decades, and is still baking up sweet magic in the kitchen," says John Ferrell.

1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon sugar
3 large eggs
1/2 cup half-and-half
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/8 teaspoon salt
2 cups cream-style cottage cheese
1 9-inch pie shell, unbaked
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

In a blender, combine the 1/2 cup sugar and the eggs and process for 15 to 20 seconds, until well blended. Add the half-and-half, flour, lemon juice, and salt; process for 15 to 20 seconds, until smooth. Add the cottage cheese; process until smooth. Pour into the pastry shell.

Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, until set. Combine the 1 tablespoon sugar and the cinnamon; sprinkle over the pie while warm.

Serves 8 to 10.

Azerbaijan: A modern Muslim nation openly defies stereotypes, befriends Israel

By Norma Zager/JNS.org

Those of the mindset that religions are inherently at war with one another must have a difficult time reconciling the friendship between the State of Israel and the Republic of Azerbaijan. Yet, in the real world, it makes perfect sense.

Muslim countries that use Islam—a traditionally peaceful religion with a rich tradition—as a weapon to stifle religious freedoms are indeed abundant, so what is different about Azerbaijan?

Azerbaijan is a moderate, progressive, and democratic majority-Muslim nation that suffers the same slings and arrows as Israel regularly does from its militant neighbors, who suppress and murder those who oppose their extremist views.

Israel, the Jewish state, was founded on the Western principles of democracy and the rule of law and has been falsely accused of suppressing other religious groups and minorities.

That is exactly what these two countries have in common, and one of the things that allows them to share a strong friendship and partnership.

Although religious principles guide their nations, as is the case with most Western-oriented nations, the tenets of religious freedom and equality for all are a basis for their governments and policies.

Azerbaijan is a secular Muslim state with a constitution assuring freedom of worship and equality to everyone. It is not uncommon to see young people listening to pop stars on their iPods, and covered women are not, at all, the norm. The streets of Baku teem with moderns, dressed in the fashion of any upscale Western capital.

The president's wife, Mehriban Aliyev, is an educated and decidedly modern woman with a career in medicine (an ophthalmologist) and a penchant for stylish designer clothing. In her role, she encourages women to be educated, independent and sophisticated in their life choices.

CREDIT: WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM.

Ilham Aliyev, president of Azerbaijan

Pop stars like Jennifer Lopez travel to Azerbaijan for concerts, and in a Gallup poll, it was revealed that Azerbaijan "is one of the most irreligious countries in the Muslim world, with about 53 percent of respondents indicating the importance of religion in their life as little or none."

On the flip side, in many other Islamic republics women are stoned, subjugated to men, and held to rigid standards of dress and behavior. Azerbaijan neither stifles nor represses its young women, but rather provides them with role models for a contemporary Muslim woman. It is a place where Muslims participate in a modern lifestyle, and still value and protect their religious ideals.

This is also the policy of Israel, a country that—despite the propaganda and lies that regularly infect the world media—is an open society where Jewish people of all walks and Arab Israelis of all religious attitudes are not only welcome, but also govern the country in the Knesset (Israel's parliament) and public offices.

So why are perceptions so opposed to the truth about both Israel and Azerbaijan, two quite accepting and open societies?

In Israel's case, it is quite obvious that the use of such lies and propaganda are designed to alienate and separate the Jewish state from the good graces of the world—to yet again villainize Jews and set them apart from the rest of society.

For Azerbaijan, it is partly a case of mistaken identity. Although the results are the same for both countries, the intent is different. Azerbaijan is lumped in among a cadre of countries that have too loud a voice and behave badly on the world stage. This is much like a child who is related to a criminal by birth, and spends his life doing good deeds with the hope of separating himself from his evil relative. Exacerbating the situation is the penchant for Westerners to simplify issues. In this case, the perceptions are "all Muslims are bad;" "all Muslims are Arabs;" "all Arabs are Muslims;" and "all Muslims are the same." Of course, none of these statements are true.

Azerbaijan and Israel have found a friendship in their commonality of shared open societies. Yet one is Muslim and one is Jewish, so how can this be? Watching these two countries coexist and deal with one another, it is actually quite easy to understand. Each year their trade and joint scientific, military, agricultural, and other business projects increase, and each nation is welcome and inviting to one another. Azerbaijan and Israel are regularly visited by each other's high-level officials, and all are welcomed with deserved pomp and circumstance.

But it must be said that Iran and the other evil empires in the Middle East put enormous pressures on Azerbaijan to fall in lockstep with their worldview, and the threats are tough and genuine. Azerbaijan is a thorn in the side of Iran, a country that seeks to control the world through an extremist Islamic caliphate. In Iranian eyes, a modern Muslim nation like Azerbaijan that is thriving is a deterrent that must be dealt with in the harshest of terms. Azerbaijan often finds itself between its own moderation and the proverbial "rock and hard place" known as Iran.

As Iran grows stronger, and it seems the current U.S. administration is determined to allow this sad state of affairs to occur, there is no doubt Azerbaijan will feel the sword of its neighbor bearing down.

One cannot predict how this will influence religious practices or its strong alliance with Israel, but from past encounters it seems Azerbaijan is resolute to walk its own path and control its own destiny. No matter how far the friendship with Israel progresses, one must applaud this young nation of only 22 years for its fortitude and unwavering battle against the stereotypes and the pressures of militant bullies.

Azerbaijan stands alone in its success as a prosperous and open Muslim society, and its friendship with Israel is proof there is room for a progressive, secular Muslim nation on the world stage." ■

Norma Zager is an award-winning international journalist and a professor at California State University, Los Angeles.

OpEd: In Ukraine, caring for caregivers

By Alan H. Gill/JNS.org

My first visit to Odessa—the "pearl of the Black Sea"—was in the 1990s after the Soviet Union's collapse. The city, even after decades of communist rule, remained a historical gem with its Potemkin Steps and ornate Opera House. It was also home to a significant Jewish population that has earned a distinct reputation for its special brand of pride.

Having survived the Nazis and the Soviets, these Jews were eager to reclaim their identity and embrace the challenges of a post-communist existence. And they had a legacy of Jewish greats to draw from: Isaac Babel, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Boris Goldstein, and even the Olympic medal-winning swimmer Lenny Krayzelburg.

In the more than 20 years that have passed since I first visited, the community has blossomed. A flagship of post-Soviet Jewish life and of the investment by the North American Jewish community and others in that goal, the city today is home to several JCCs, synagogues, Jewish cultural and educational opportunities, leadership training programs, nursery schools, and many other outlets for Jewish life. And yet a common thread has persisted: economic fluctuations and political crises that have contributed to poverty and dire need among the elderly, families, and score of other Jews.

Those factors—including news this week of a downgrade in Ukraine's credit rating, fears of energy stoppages, and unrest—came to a climax over the last five months in Ukraine, and I got to witness this firsthand when I recently visited Odessa. I spent my time there speaking to local Jews who expressed their concerns for the future, their increasing needs, and their appreciation for our emergency response during their time of need.

And I also spent time speaking to the staff of my organization, JDC. They share the concerns of their neighbors, and are apprehensive about what lies ahead. The difference for them, however, is that they don't just shoulder individual burdens, they also shoulder the growing concerns of those in their care. And it is that special dynamic—the caregiver caring for others even as they themselves are impacted by the crisis—that is profoundly felt in Ukraine today.

I heard from our brave staff about deep personal stress, friends facing hopelessness, and family members torn apart by changing borders. But there were two passing remarks that stood out for me above the rest: "Every night I go to bed and I am praying to wake up the next morning and just realize everything that has happened today was a bad dream" and "I am not supposed to show that I am under stress."

Inexorably linked, the two sentiments demonstrate both the enormous stress that our staffers experience and their self-imposed professional mandate to keep a stiff upper lip, even when the circumstances are dire. And this is increased manyfold when you consider that these professionals—and the employees of programs and facilities we support, including social and home care workers—operate out of four offices and 32 *Hesed* social welfare centers that serve more than 1,000 locations around Ukraine. They therefore need outlets to vent, to constructively channel their feelings, and ensure they can continue to carry out the *avodat hakodesh*—holy work—they do to ensure that Jews in need have access to life-saving services and Jewish community engagement.

CREDIT: JDC.

In Odessa, Alan H. Gill shares a story with a Ukranian child

To help with this, we have provided them training for handling high-stress environments, counseling, daily support calls, and increased visits from senior professionals to Ukraine to help guarantee that our staffers there know that we support them and that they have a safety net when they need that extra comfort required to get through a very tough day. After all, at the height of the crisis in Ukraine, they were spending nights in clients' homes, tending to clients on a 24-hour basis, and even traveling into areas of unrest to ensure the homebound had care.

This is all an important reminder that the lessons learned in Ukraine—and throughout the world in crisis zones where we have enacted programs that ensure care for the caregiver—must be absorbed and implemented as part of the value of mutual responsibility that organizations inject into their larger goals. For us, that connectedness and support system is critical today—not just because it is good professional practice, but because it instills the values that underpin our century of work.

The Jews of Ukraine, and caregivers working on the ground there, must know that they have a collective hand extended to them at this time—worrying for them, and working hard to be a source of strength for them. In that empathy is the ultimate expression of the story of the Jewish People: that we can transcend time, place, and even our daily worries to embrace our fellow Jews, acknowledge their suffering, and impart a sense of lovingkindess worlds away. In Odessa, and throughout Ukraine, they need it more now than ever before. ■

Alan H. Gill is CEO of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC).

May 2014

Thursday 1

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. **Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring muscle firming through stretching** exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members; 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 10 a.m. Current Events at 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. For information, contact rachaelhoffenblum@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990.

Monthly Birthday Celebration: JCC Adult Programs. Entertainment provided by local pianist Laurel Federbush. 12:30 p.m.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. Easy and oldies from 7:30–8:30 p.m. Intermediate and requests from 8:30–10 p.m. $5 per class. Students and children free. Learn the latest Israeli dances, line dances, mixers and more. Families welcome. *Thursdays.*

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 2

Rabbi Levy's Lunch and Learn: TBE. Informal discussion. Participants are welcome to bring lunch. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m. Tot dinner at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service with Kol Halev, Yom HaShoah and Adult Bat Mitzvah. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 3

Torah Study with Rabbi: TBE. 8:50 a.m.

Shabbat Limmud: BIC. 9 a.m.

Adult B'not Mitzvah: TBE. 10–11:30 a.m.

Eating Within Our Ethics and Our Budgets: AARC. Havadalah and learning are combined for an evening program exploring the decisions we make about where and what food we buy. AARC members Rena Basch and Carole Caplan will facilitate a discussion of the myriad questions of how to use food purchasing dollars most ethically, responsibly and effectively. Held at a private home. For information and to RSVP, email ravmichal@aarecon.org or phone 845-2361. 7 p.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 4

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and discover the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Social Action Committee Meeting: BIC. 10:30 a.m.

8th Grade Graduation: BIC BIRS. 11 a.m.

Beit Sefer Informational Brunch: AARC. Family friendly brunch introduces the AARC religious school to parents and their children. Meets at home of Caroline Richardson and Paul Resnick. RSVP to Karin Ahbel-Rappe at k.ahbel-rappe@sbcglobal.net or leave message at 445-1910. Noon–2 p.m.

Jewish Film Festival: JCC. Annual event celebrating film and the impact of Jewish culture on current movies and filmmakers while providing a forum for the discussion of films from around the world that illuminate Jewish issues and principles. Tickets are $10 each and film passes are $90/members, $100/non-members. For information, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. *Through May 8.*

Kol Halev Recording: TBE. 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Monday 5

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email jessica@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Jewish Film Festival: JCC. Annual event celebrating film and the impact of Jewish culture on current movies and filmmakers while providing a forum for the discussion of films from around the world that illuminate Jewish issues and principles. Tickets are $10 each and film passes are $90/members, $100/non-members. For information, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. *Through May 8.*

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:30–8:30 p.m.

Bricks4Kidz Enrichment Class: JCC. Kids will learn about physics and math in a fun and engaging way. $60 for full session through June 2. No class on Memorial Day, May 26. For information, email ethankrasnow@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. 4:45–5:45 p.m. *Mondays through June 2.*

Keshet Classes: BIC. 6 p.m.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. 7:30–9 p.m.

Tuesday 6

Tuesdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. Low impact exercise in a supportive environment. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. Games and Activities including mahjong and quilting, including making quilts for children of Mott Hospital; 1 p.m. For information, phone 971-0990.

Field Trip to Jewish Film Festival: JCC Adult Programs. Timing TBD. For information and to RSVP for the trip, phone 971-0990.

Jewish Film Festival: JCC. Annual event celebrating film and the impact of Jewish culture on current movies and filmmakers of today while providing a forum for the discussion of films from around the world that illuminate Jewish issues and principles. Tickets are $10 each and film passes are $90/members, $100/non-members. For information, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. *Through May 8.*

Yiddish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Hebrew 104: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Musical Meditations: TBE. 5:30–6:15 p.m.

Kol Halev Recording: TBE. 6–9 p.m.

"Peoplehood and Its Role and Significance in Jewish Life:" BIC. 8 p.m. *Also May 13.*

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. With Rabbi Rod Glogower at the Lewis/Bernstein home, 1304 Cambridge. 8–9:15 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Torah may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, with the classical Rashi commentary. 8 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 7

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Celebrating Yom Ha'Atzmaut, Israel Independence Day. Noon.

Jewish Film Festival: JCC. Annual event celebrating film and the impact of Jewish culture on current movies and filmmakers while providing a forum for the discussion of films from around the world that illuminate Jewish issues and principles. Tickets are $10 each and film passes are $90/members, $100/non-members. For information, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990. *Through May 8.*

Mahj: TBE. Off-site from 1–3 p.m.

Hebrew 101: TBE. 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Hebrew 103: TBE. 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Thursday 8

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 10 a.m. Current Events; 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. For information, phone 971-0990.

Jewish Film Festival: JCC. Last day of annual event. Celebrating film and the impact of Jewish culture on current movies and filmmakers of today while providing a forum for the discussion of films from around the world that illuminate Jewish issues and principles. Tickets are $10 each; Film passes are $90/members, $100/non-members. For information, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. Easy and oldies from 7:30–8:30 p.m. Intermediate and requests from 8:30–10 p.m. $5 per class. Students and children free. Learn the latest Israeli dances, line dances, mixers and more. Families welcome. *Thursdays.*

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 9

Rabbi Levy's Lunch and Learn: TBE. Informal discussion. Participants are welcome to bring lunch. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Afternoon Delights: JCC. The Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra (AASO) presents their Chamber Series. Refreshments served at 1 p.m. Concert at 1:30 p.m. Tickets for $10 can be purchased through the AASO or at the JCC on the day of the event. For information, email karenfreedland@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990.

20th Anniversary Celebration Weekend: Pardes Hannah. Welcome and light appetizers at 6 p.m. Service at 7 p.m., led by Hazzan Shulamit Fairman and Rabbi Hannah Dresner. Potluck dinner follows. At the home of Lucinda Kurtz and Oran Hesterman. Suggested donation for weekend-long series is $65. Suggested donation for Saturday Chanting and Havdalah Celebration is $25. Sliding scale available. For information, see http://pardeshannah.wordpress.com. *Also May 10.*

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m. Tot Dinner at 1:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service and Adult B'not Mitzvah at 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Saturday 10

Torah Study with Rabbi: TBE. 8:50 a.m.

Brotherhood Breakfast: TBE. Off-site. 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Shabbat Morning Service: AARC. Participatory community service integrates liturgy with music, chanting and contemporary English readings, including Torah service and discussion. The service and discussion this month will include special discussion about the celebration of Parashat Behar and how it relates to the upcoming Shmitah year. Led by Rabbi Michal Woll at the JCC. For information, phone 845-2361 or email Rabbi Michal at ravmichal@aarecon.org. 10 a.m.–Noon.

20th Anniversary Celebration Weekend: Pardes Hannah. Service led by Rabbi Aura Ahuvia and Rabbi Chaya Gusfield from 10 a.m.–noon. Lunch and additional teachings and reflections to follow. Beth Israel Annex Lower Level. Suggested donation for weekend-long series is $65. Suggested donation for Saturday Chanting and Havdalah Celebration is $25. Sliding scale available. For information, see http://pardeshannah.wordpress.com. Also May 9.

Chapel Service: TBE. 10–11:30 a.m.

Mini Minyan and Tot Shabbat: BIC. Mini Minyan for K-2nd Grade and Tot Shabbat. 11:15 a.m.

20th Anniversary Celebration Weekend: Pardes Hannah. Seudat Slishit Shabbat Third Meal from 6–7:30 p.m. Light meal and teachings at home of Linda and Richard Greene, followed by Saturday Chanting and Havdalah Celebration with R. Shefa Gold at 8 p.m. Suggested donation for weekend-long series is $65. Suggested donation for Saturday Chanting and Havdalah Celebration is $25. Sliding scale available. For information, see http://pardeshannah.wordpress.com. *Also May 9.*

Movie Night: TBE. Joint STC/TBE activity. 7–10 p.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 11

Planning Session: BIC Men's Club. 9:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and discover the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 12

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email jessica@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Supporting You at a Time of Need: BIC. Funerals and Mourning at Beth Israel and Beth Israel Memorial Gardens. 8 p.m.

Tuesday 13

Tuesdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. Low impact exercise in a supportive environment. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. Games and Activities including mahjong and quilting, including making quilts for children of Mott Hospital; 1 p.m. For information, phone 971-0990.

Yiddish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. Held at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367. 1:30 p.m.

Hebrew 104: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Musical Meditations: TBE. 5:30–6:15 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. With Rabbi Rod

Glogower at the Lewis/Bernstein home, 1304 Cambridge. 8–9:15 p.m.

"Peoplehood and Its Role and Significance in Jewish Life:" BIC. 8 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Torah may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, with the classical Rashi commentary. 8 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 14

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Noon.

Hebrew 101: TBE. 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Hebrew 103: TBE. 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Thursday 15

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 10 a.m. Current Events; 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. For information, phone 971-0990.

Spirituality Book Club with Cantor Rose: TBE. Noon–1 p.m.

Blood Pressure Screening: JCC Adult Program. Nurses from CARE Response visit the JCC on second Thursday each month to provide free blood pressure screenings and information on staying healthy. No RSVP required. 12:30 p.m.

Concert Presentation: JCC Adult Programs. Caroline Helton performs from 1–2 p.m.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. Easy and oldies from 7:30–8:30 p.m. Intermediate and requests from 8:30–10 p.m. $5/per class. Students and children free. Learn the latest Israeli dances, line dances, mixers and more. Families welcome. *Thursdays.*

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 16

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6:00 p.m. Tot dinner at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service. Friday Night Live with HSSC and Anniversary Birthday Shabbat. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar*

Saturday 17

Torah Study with Rabbi: TBE. 8:50 a.m.

Shabbat Limmud: BIC. 9 a.m.

Chapel Service: TBE. 10–11:30 a.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 18

Executive Committee Meeting: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. *Every Sunday.*

Lag B'omer Picnic: Chabad. Annual picnic dinner of BBQ hotdogs, salads and drinks. Fun and special programs and prizes for children and adults. For time and location, phone 995-3276.

Kol Halev Recording: TBE. 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Monday 19

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email jessica@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Men's Torah Study: TBE. 7:30–9 p.m.

Tuesday 20

Paradigm Shift–Transformational Life Teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe: Chabad. First session of new six-session course by the Rohr Learning Institute. Course offered as part of series of local activities marking 20 years since the passing of "the Rebbe," Rabbi Menachem M Schneerson, "of righteous memory." The Rebbe was a visionary religious leader who inspired countless individuals during his lifetime and established a global network of educational, social, and religious institutions to revive post-holocaust Jewish landscape. 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Tuesdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. Low impact exercise in a supportive environment. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. Games and Activities including mahjong and quilting, including making quilts for children of Mott Hospital; 1 p.m. For information, phone 971-0990.

Yiddish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Hebrew 104: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Musical Meditations: TBE. 5:30–6:15 p.m.

Spirituality Book Club with Cantor Rose: TBE. 7:30–9 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. With Rabbi Rod Glogower at the Lewis/Bernstein home, 1304 Cambridge. 8–9:15 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Torah may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, with the classical Rashi commentary. 8 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 21

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Noon.

Mahj: TBE. Off-site. 1–3 p.m.

Hebrew 101: TBE. 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Hebrew 103: TBE. 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Board Meeting: BIC. 8 p.m.

Thursday 22

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring

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muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 10 a.m. Current Events with Heather Dombey; 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. For information, phone 971-0990.

Speaker Presentation: JCC Adult Programs. Presenting Lauren Zinn of Zinn House. 1–2 p.m.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. Easy and oldies from 7:30–8:30 p.m. Intermediate and requests from 8:30–10 p.m. $5 per class. Students and children free. Learn the latest Israeli dances, line dances, mixers and more. Families welcome. *Thursdays.*

Brotherhood Dinner: TBE. Off-site. 6–8 p.m.

Mahj: TBE. Held off-site. 7:30–9:30 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 23

Rabbi Levy's Lunch and Learn: TBE. **12:30–1:30 p.m.**

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6:00 p.m. Tot dinner at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service at 7:30 p.m.

Shul-In: TBE AARTY. 9 p.m.–10 a.m.

Fourth Friday Shabbat: AARC. Musical Kabbalat Shabbat services are held at the JCC and are led by Rabbi Michal Woll. Services followed by a vegetarian potluck dinner. Pizza nosh for children before services at 6 p.m. and childcare provided during services from 6:15–7:30 p.m. Reservations requested for pizza and childcare. Leave a message at 445-1910 or email info@aarecon.org. 6–10 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Saturday 24

Torah Study with Rabbi: TBE. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. 11:15 a.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar*

Sunday 25

Shmita Study Group: AARC. Group meets on 4th Sunday mornings at the JCC from January–June. Group delves into the sources and contemporary relevance of Sabbatical/Shmita with lively dialogue on personal, social, communal and environmental transformations. For information, phone 445-1910 or email Marcy Epstein at dr_marcy@hotmail.com. 10–11:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. *Every Sunday*

Monday 26

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email jessica@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Sit n' Knit: TBE Sisterhood. Off-site from 7:30–8:30 p.m.

Tuesday 27

Tuesdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members. 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. Low impact exercise in a supportive environment. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. Games and Activities including mahjong and quilting, including making quilts for children of Mott Hospital; 1 p.m. For information, phone 971-0990.

Paradigm Shift–Transformational Life Teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe: Chabad. First session of new six-session course by the Rohr Learning Institute. Course offered as part of series of local activities marking 20 years since the passing of "the Rebbe," Rabbi Menachem M Schneerson, "of righteous memory." The Rebbe was a visionary religious leader who inspired countless individuals during his lifetime and established a global network of educational, social, and religious institutions to revive post-holocaust Jewish landscape. 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

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Hebrew 104: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Musical Meditations: TBE. 5:30–6:15 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. With Rabbi Rod Glogower at the Lewis/Bernstein home, 1304 Cambridge. 8–9:15 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Torah may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, with the classical Rashi commentary. 8 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Wednesday 28

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Noon

Hebrew 101: TBE. 5:30–6:30 p.m.

5th Grade Family BBQ: BIC. 6 p.m.

Hebrew 103: TBE. 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Thursday 29

Thursdays at the JCC: JCC Adult Programs. Join Diane Dahl for Callanetics featuring muscle firming through stretching exercises synchronized to music. $12/members; $14 non-members; 9:30 a.m. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar. $4 per session or 3 sessions per month for $10; 10 a.m. Current Events at 11 a.m. Homemade Dairy Lunch Buffet. $3 per person; Noon. For information, phone 971-0990.

Presentation: JCC Adult Programs. Presenting Hip Hop artist Julius Theophilus. 1–2 p.m.

Back Door Food Pantry: TBE. 4–7 p.m.

Israeli Dancing: JCC. Easy and oldies from 7:30–8:30 p.m. Intermediate and requests from 8:30–10 p.m. $5 per class. Students and children free. Learn the latest Israeli dances, line dances, mixers and more. Families welcome. *Thursdays.*

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 30

Rabbi Levy's Lunch and Learn: TBE. Informal discussion. Participants are welcome to bring lunch. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Shabbat Services for Young Families: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m. Tot dinner at 6:30 p.m. Popsicle Oneg follows. Shabbat Service honoring Rabbi Lisa Delson at 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 31

Torah Study with Rabbi: TBE. 8:50 a.m.

Dinner for Rabbi Delson: TBE TNT. Off-site. 6–7:30 p.m.

Mud Hens Outing: AARC. Celebrate spring with a trip to see the Toledo Mud Hens play the Charlotte Knights at Fifth Third Field in Toledo. If interested, email info@aarecon.org or leave a message at 445-1910. 7 p.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Weekly Friday night Shabbat services

Shabbat Service: AAOM. Services held at UM Hillel. Call 994-9258 in advance to confirm time.

Shabbat Service: BIC. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m., followed by tot dinner. Traditional Service at 7:30 p.m. Once a month Middle School Service at 7:30 p.m. For information, call 665-4744.

Shabbat Service: Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation. 6:15 p.m. at the JCC the fourth Friday each month. Musical Shabbat service followed by vegetarian potluck. Pizza nosh for the kids at 6:00 p.m. Childcare provided during the service. All are welcome to attend. For information, call 975-6527, email mamacohen@comcast.net, or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Service: Chabad. Begins at candle-lighting time. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals and Jewish holidays. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Weekly Shabbat services

Shabbat Services: AAOM. Morning service, 9:30 a.m. Evening service, 35 minutes before sunset. Call 662-5805 for information. Mincha/Ma'ariv with Seudah Shlisheet and Dvar Torah every week. Torah topics and a bite to eat. Discussions led by Rabbi Rod Glogower and other local scholars. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals. UM Hillel.

Shabbat Services: BIC. 9:30 a.m. Morning childcare from 10 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Shabbat Services: AA Reconstructionist Congregation. Morning services held the second Saturday of each month at the JCC from 10 a.m.–noon integrating traditional liturgy with music, chanting and contemporary readings including Torah service and discussion. A morning of songs and text study takes place the first Saturday of each month. For info, email info@aarecon.org or call 913-9705 or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Services: Chabad. Friday night services at Shabbat candle lighting time. Saturday morning services at 9:45 a.m. Afternoon services 45 minutes before sundown. Call 995-3276 for Home Hospitality and Meals for Shabbat and Jewish Holidays.

Shabbat Services: Pardes Hannah. Generally meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Call 663-4039 for more information. 10 a.m. Led by Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg.

Shabbat Services: TBE. Torah Study with Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m. Morning Minyan with Rabbi Delson and lay leaders at 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m. most weeks. Call the office at 665-4744 or consult website at www.templebethemeth.org for service details.

Home Hospitality for Shabbat and Holiday Meals: AAOM. Call 662-5805 in advance.

Home Hospitality and Meals: Chabad. Every Shabbat and Holiday. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Phone numbers and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM)
1429 Hill Street 994-5822

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC)
P.O. Box 7451, Ann Arbor 913-9705

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC)
2000 Washtenaw Ave. 665-9897

Chabad House
715 Hill Street 995-3276

Jewish Community Center (JCC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 971-0990

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 975-9872

Jewish Family Services (JFS)
2245 South State Street 769-0209

Jewish Federation
2939 Birch Hollow Drive 677-0100

Pardes Hannah
2010 Washtenaw Ave. 761-5324

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE)
2309 Packard Road 665-4744

UM Hillel
1429 Hill Street 769-0500

Shabbat Candlelighting

May 2	8:14 p.m.
May 9	8:22 p.m.
May 16	8:29 p.m.
May 23	8:36 p.m.
May 30	8:42 p.m.

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5/11: NORTH BY NORTHWEST (1959)
5/13: PSYCHO (1960)
5/18: THE MANXMAN (1929, SILENT WITH LIVE ORGAN MUSIC*)
5/20: FAMILY PLOT (1976)
5/25: BLACKMAIL (1929, SILENT WITH LIVE ORGAN MUSIC*)
5/27: SERIES FINALE! THE BIRDS (1963)
* A restoration by the BFI National Archive in association with ITV Studios Global Entertainment, Rialto Pictures and Park Circus Films.
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Impact Funds, continued from page 1

• Nine community organizations who do not receive regular allocations from the Federation received funding to engage in community projects either by themselves or in combination with others.

• Existing beneficiary agencies received seed funding to launch new projects.

• Nearly 1,000 individuals have voted for their favorite proposals.

• Community members and organizations have expressed appreciation at the opportunity to participate in and benefit from Federation disbursements not normally available to them.

Blatt says, "Over the last three years the Jewish Community Impact Fund has become a signature program of the Jewish Federation that invites the entire community to engage with us to make our community stronger, more collaborative and more inclusive."

2014 awards by community voting

Jewish Community Center: JCC Scouts of Ann Arbor: $7,500

"The JCC Scouts of Ann Arbor" is a unique scouting program offered to girls and boys in grades K–8. The program will foster a love for outdoor experiences and nature; teach a variety of skills not often taught in schools; develop character, leadership, citizenship and a sense of personal achievement; teach basic principles of Judaism; and create unique year-round niche for the JCC that will serve as a feeder for other youth activities. Impact Grant funding will assist the JCC with travel expenses for off-site field trips, overnights and program fees and ensure that every child who wishes to participate will be able to do so regardless of their ability to pay.

Jewish Family Services: Jewish Family Life Education: $10,000

JFS intends to rebuild and enhance capacity to provide Jewish Life Education and Outreach programs to the local Jewish community. These programs stopped expanding in 2008 when all JFS resources were diverted to direct services in response to the economic crisis. Funding is requested to partially cover a new part-time position (0.4 FTE) of a Jewish Family Life Education and Outreach Coordinator with the following responsibilities: arrange six Jewish Family Life education programs; expand outreach to facilities with under-served Jewish populations and establish cultural activities for Jewish residents of these facilities; recruit and coordinate volunteers and form a program committee to help with planning and implementation; coordinate a partnership with the JCC (JFS has committed to provide transportation for up to six special older adult events, while JCC will cover space and set up for up to six JFS Jewish Life Education programs held at the JCC).

Awarded by Selection Committee

Jewish Communal Leadership Program, Frankel Center, UM Hillel: Gesher.Edu: $9,000

Gesher.Edu leverages Ann Arbor's combination of a world–class university and small-town intimacy to develop provocative intergenerational programming that radiates throughout the community. The three campus organizations will develop a public program featuring diverse voices keyed to local Jewish concerns (pilot year: "The Future of Midwest Jewish Communities") and produce a DVD featuring insights and questions from the event. Trained facilitators will then use the DVD to extend the conversation, meeting with small groups gathered in partnership with local Jewish organizations. Summary reports from the large and smaller conversations will spark continued engagement in Ann Arbor and beyond.

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation: Food, Land and Justice: $5,000

Food, Land and Justice will be a year of interactive, educational activities for all ages that explore food justice and sustainable land use, and their basis in Jewish tradition. The activities will include days of learning through action, a youth farm curriculum and pilot project, and outreach educational materials. The group's efforts will culminate in the Ann Arbor Jewish Food Festival, connecting Ann Arbor to a budding Jewish Food movement. These activities will create connections to food justice and sustainability through personal experiences and help participants develop a Jewish perspective on land use, agricultural practices, and tikkun olam.

Many want to change the world and know that their children are going to inherit that responsibility. But teaching kids the value of tikkun olam and finding meaningful volunteer opportunities is hard. Family Salon is creating four fun and engaging ways for children to nurture equality and happiness in the community. In "Backpack-tacular" kids will stuff backpacks with school supplies for underprivileged children. In "Canvas for Kids" participants brighten the hallways of Mott Children's Hospital. In "Apple Pickin' Kids" families will pick and donate apples to Food Gatherers. A "Gratitude Party" will highlight participants' appreciation for their efforts and will celebrate everyone's achievements.

Jewish Cultural Society Sustainable Sukkot: $2,500

This proposal aims to engage everyone, but especially intercultural, inter-married Jewish families through a culturally based Sustainable Sukkot celebrating diversity in Jewish culture and promoting inherent values of Jewish life. Many families are intercultural, value their Jewish heritage and want their children to maintain a Jewish identity. Sustainable Sukkot will be a fun family-friendly, casual (Hamish) potluck. Favorite foods and recipes representing diverse cultures will be shared. A"green" sukkah will be decorated and there will be interactive presentations by the Community Farm of Ann Arbor. Recipes and stories will be developed into an online database to continue the conversation through social media.

Salon: Jewish Business Network: $1,000

The Jewish Business Network (JBN) will be a hub for Jewish businesspeople in the Ann Arbor area to gather, interact, promote their businesses and become better educated on a variety of topics. The JBN will be a place where:

• Entrepreneurs can pitch their ideas for funding

• Business owners can seek advice on organizational challenges

· Members can be inspired by others' success stories

· Fruitful relationships will be initiated

The objective of the JBN is to facilitate a lively, connected community of Jewish business professionals – which coincides with the Federation's mission to create and support a strong and vibrant Jewish community. ■

Vitals

Mazel tov

Rita Benn, on her bat mitzvah, May 2.
Carla Grayson, on her bat mitzvah, May 3.
Sarai Koster-Mockeridge, on her bat mitzvah, May 3.
Judie Lax, on her bat mitzvah, May 9.
Natalie Iglewicz, on her bat mitzvah, May 9.
Julie Ellis, on her bat mitzvah, May 9.
Abigail Gaies on her bat mitzvah, May 10.
Sarah Caston on her bat mitzvah, May 17.
Ian Rothsein, on his bar mitzvah, May 24.
Lily Rosenberg on her bat mitzvah, May 24.
Benjamin Ramseyer-Gordon, on his bar mitzvah, May 31.
Sarah Lewis, on her bat mitzvah, May 31.
Ethan Kahana on his bar mitzvah, May 31.
Ron and Lonnie Sussman on the birth of their granddaughter, Anna Claire Sussman, daughter of Ari and Jaimie Sussman.
Marilyn Friedman on the birth of her great grandson, Henry Wyn Lipson, son of Bryan and Sloane Lipson.

Condolences

William Saalberg, on the death of his father, Jim Saalberg, March 11.
Kathi Cohen, on the death of her mother, Ricki Nederlander, March 13.
Eric Young on the death of his mother, Phyllis Young, March 3.

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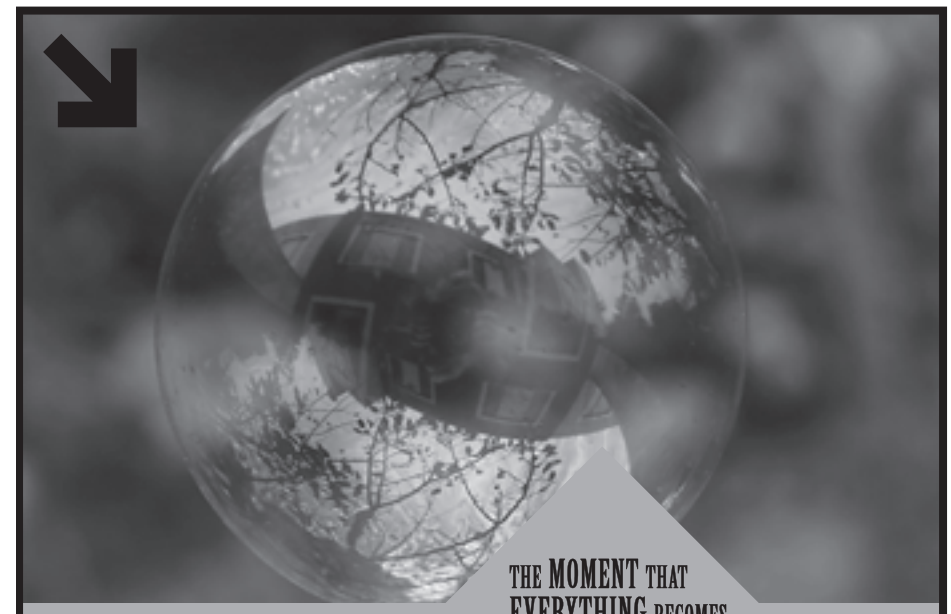
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11/13-14
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12/9
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1/7-10
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1/17
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1/23
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1/31
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2/5
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2/6
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2/14
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2/14-21
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2/15
JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER ORCHESTRA WITH WYNTON MARSALIS
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2/19
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2/20
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2/21-22
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3/12-13
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3/14-15
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Dance, SERIES:YOU

3/22
CHICAGO SYMPHONY WINDS
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3/25
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Choral Union

4/4
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4/9
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4/16
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4/17
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Global, SERIES:YOU

4/19
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4/23
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